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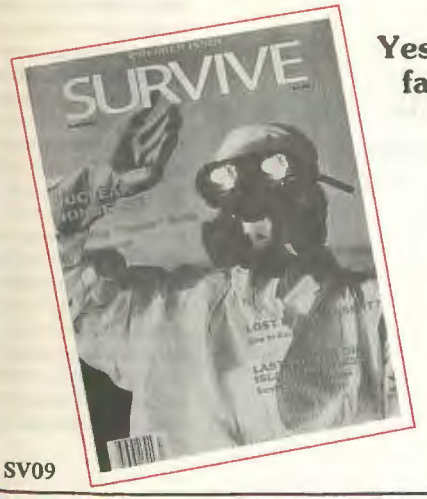

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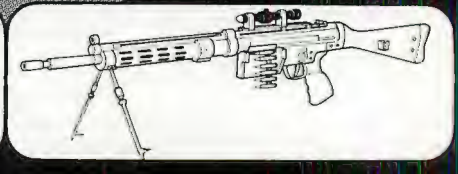

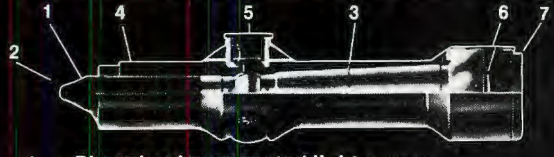

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EDITOR'S NOTES

"If the time is not yet ripe to construct an appropriate monument to honor our fallen comrades, let us bide our time and keep the faith. Time is on our side."

Col. Andrew P. O'Meara Jr.

"I would prefer no memorial to what is proposed."

Bernard F. Halloran

Vietnam veterans O'Meara and Halloran, who wrote the comments above in letters to *The Army Times,* are clearly opposed to the design selected for the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.

We don't know if they represent the majority of Vietnam veterans. Neither does Jan Scruggs of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund — the group steering the privately-funded project — nor the government, nor any of the various individuals nor groups which have spoken out on the issue.

In April's *Soldier of Fortune,* Publisher Robert K. Brown pointed out some of the major flaws in both the process used to select the memorial design and the design itself.

The VVMF Design Committee did not include a single Vietnam veteran; veterans were, in fact, deliberately excluded.

The design — two sloping walls of black Swedish marble that form a "V", depressed 10 feet into the ground, with the names of America's Vietnam War dead inscribed in the chronological order in which they were killed — makes far too many ambiguous statements.

It was quickly nicknamed "The Black Gash," and as Vietnam veteran Al Santoli, author of *Everything We Had,* said, it will be a "place to go and be depressed."

Swedish marble? Black? Below ground? The V shape: Is that V for Vietnam, for the famous protest symbol of the anti-war movement or for "victims" of the "useless waste," which is Maya Ying Lin's (the memorial's designer) description of the Vietnam War? Why put the names in chronological order of death without service designation? So that some young child can never find or see his father's name? So that men who made the ultimate individual sacrifice will have their individuality submerged into what could become the wailing wall of future anti-draft, anti-war movements?

Clearly, "The Black Gash" is unacceptable. It honors neither the living nor the dead.

Some have suggested a compromise. Make it white and bring it above ground. Put the names in alphabetical order. Put a flag pole at the intersection. Put a statue of a rifleman in front. Put the word honor in the inscription.

Those are band-aids. Flags and statues and white marble may never make it acceptable.

Some Vietnam veterans have said they want something heroic. Defenders of the present design say it is impossible to design a heroic-type monument for the soldiers who fought in Vietnam: They lost, didn't they? The soldiers didn't lose the Vietnam War and the fact that it was lost doesn't make their deeds any less heroic. There are hundreds if not thousands of memorials in the southern United States to the soldiers of the Confederacy, who did lose a war.

Is a heroic-type monument necessary? Will a white marble rifleman, caught forever in a moment of glory by the sculptor's chisel, say, "Thanks, well done, welcome home," to the Americans who served in Vietnam?

What I do know is that before the memorial is built we need to find out more. We need to stop the travesty taking place in Washington, re-evaluate why the memorial should be built and what statement it should make. We need to start over.

We need to poll the Vietnam veterans. We may need to select a more appropriate design and we definitely need some veterans on the selection committee.

Because we need to deliver your message to Scruggs, the VVFW and the government, we are going to publish over the next few months the following questionaire. If you're a Vietnam veteran or a survivor of one who was killed (mother, father, wife, child), fill it out, send it to us and we'll make sure your opinion gets to the right places.

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If not, what should the design be: _____
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COVER: The Face Of War In Angola — South African soldier, wearing "Black Is Beautiful" face camo, is caught in reflective mood during break in action during Operation Daisy in Angola. Stephan Terblanche's account of Daisy starts on page 48 of this issue. Photo: Al Venter

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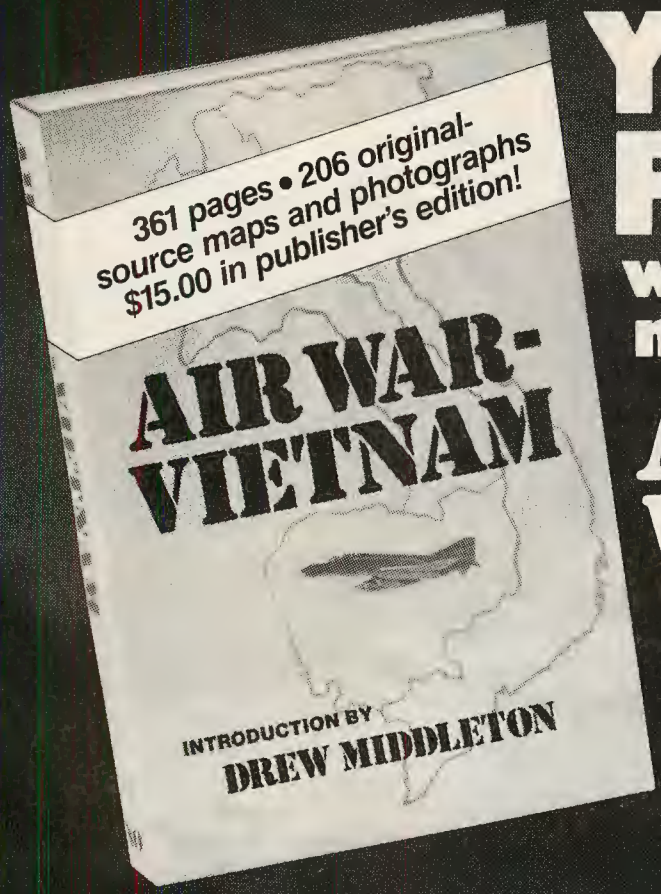

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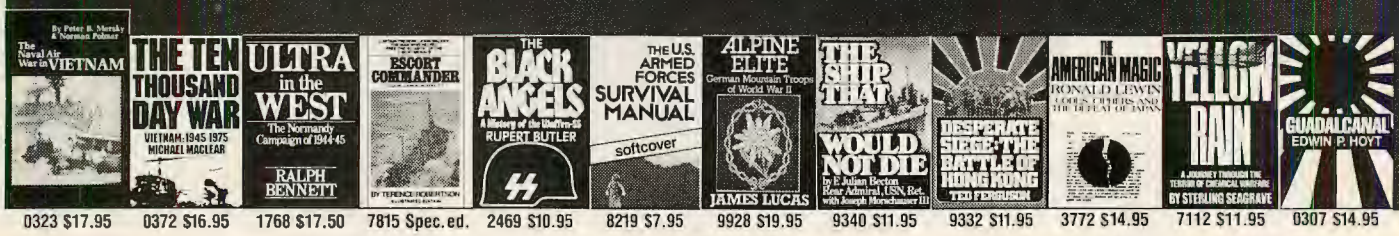

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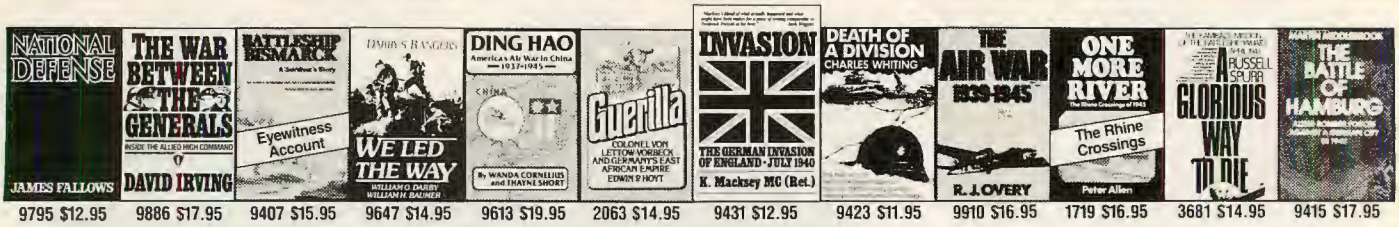

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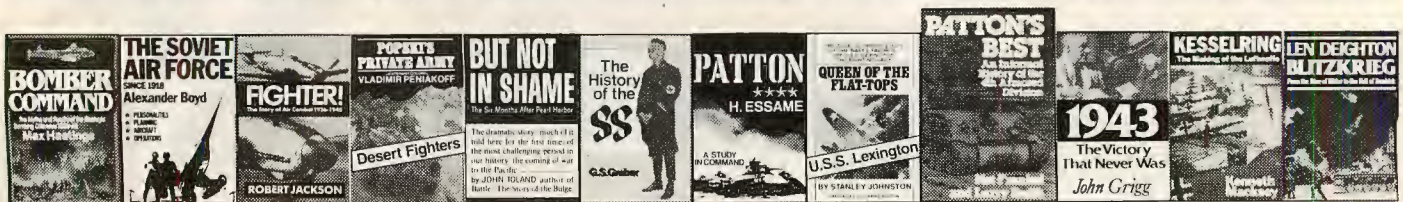

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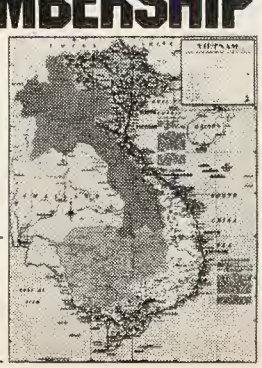

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BULLETIN BOARD

by Bob Poos

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MORTON GROVE UPDATE . . .

Gun owners in the Chicago suburb of Morton Grove continue to fight a village ordinance banning handgun ownership and sales which has been upheld by a U.S. district judge.

Leader of opposition to the law, Victor D. Quilici, told SOF: "First we'll file a motion to bar enforcement of the law and then we'll appeal to the U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago."

He said the ordinance was passed last June by a village council vote of 4-2 despite strong opposition from some 98 percent of the citizens attending the council hearing.

WARRIORS WARNING . . .

In its October '81 issue, SOF published a favorable review of a book by one Richard Stack, entitled *Warriors*, a photo essay on Marine Corps boot camp at Parris Island. It drew a heavy response of requests with money orders to Stack for copies.

Readers are advised not to make further requests. Stack's phone has been disconnected and numerous ef-

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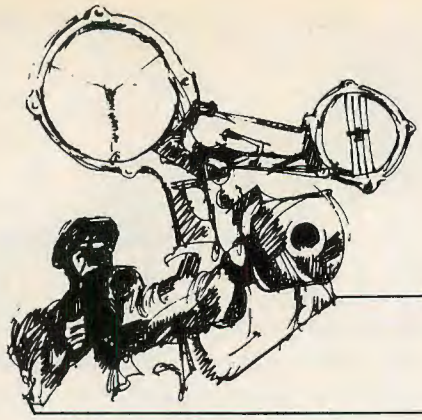

FLAK

MORE FALLOUT ON "YELLOW RAIN" ...

Sirs:

According to *Chemical & Engineering News* (11/16/81), the weekly journal of the American Chemical Society, the United States now has four samples from Laos which contain tricothecene (yellow rain) toxins. The SOF recon into Laos (January '82) apparently provided two of those samples. Congratulations!

Psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, survivor of Dachau, wrote that the few Jews who escaped from the death camps and tried to warn the Warsaw Ghetto were told to shut up. The Warsaw Jews denied the horrible truth, closed their minds and went quietly to the gas chambers.

Likewise, many of us scientists probably deny your evidence because it's so frightening. Luckily, we are used to facing unpleasant truths and can move fast when confronted with enough evidence. Please keep the evidence coming. Every bit puts another crack in the Russian empire.

Yours truly,
Gordon Kitsuwa
Chemist
Former Army Chemical Corpsman
Honolulu, Hawaii

You bet! We're going to keep chipping away! — The Eds.

TURNED INTO A YOKE!

PRIMER ON COMMUNISM ...

Sirs:

Just a note to say "A Grave for Ignatiev" should be required reading for high school students.

Keep up the excellent work.

Thank you,
Wayne Boehmke
Horseshoe Bend, Arkansas

It's a different story than Ten Days That Shook The World, *that's for sure! — The Eds.*

Continued on page 18

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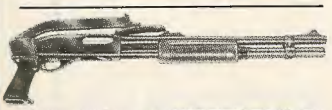

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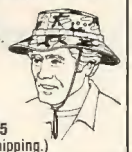

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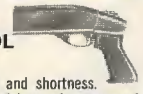

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COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Pistol Potpourri

by Ken Hackathorn

THE search for a quality magazine for the Colt .45 auto pistol has been widespread in recent years. Many competitive practical shooters have modified various stock-production magazines to increase the cartridge capacity to eight rounds. This approach gives the 1911 pistol in .45 ACP a total capacity of nine rounds when fully loaded. The trick is to cut off part of the magazine follower and shorten the spring to allow an extra cartridge to be inserted into the magazine body. This system works with varying degrees of success. Its most common failures are unreliable feeding of rounds and failure of the modified eight-shot magazines to lock the slide to the rear on the last shot. In many practical shooting events in which ammo capacity and speed are critical, the added round can be crucial.

The Devel Corporation, Dept. SOF, 3441 W. Brainard Rd., Cleveland, OH 44122, has recently introduced a new-production eight-round magazine for the Colt Government Model and Commander .45 ACP pistol. Devel's new design is the same size as the standard seven-shot magazine. (It does not protrude from the pistol butt.) The new Devel magazine not only offers eight-round capacity but a badly needed standard of reliability and quality. Prototypes of these magazines have been used both by Ross Seyfried and Mickey Fowler, who placed first and second respectively in the 1981 World IPSC Championship matches in South Africa.

I have been testing and using a prototype Devel magazine since the fall of 1981. It has proven to be both rugged and reliable. Unlike many of the home-brewed conversions, the Devel design locks the slide open on the last shot, and falls free of the weapon when ejected. At a suggested retail price of $18.95, the Devel magazine will be a welcome addition to the .45 auto-shooter's accessory kit.

DUE to the 1911 .45 pistol's popularity in practical-pistol shooting, demand for match-grade barrels has reached a record high. For the last five or six years, shooters have stood in line for Irv Stone's Bar-Sto stainless-steel barrels. Once, part of this demand was filled with various GI-production National Match .45 auto barrels and bushings, which had been supplied both by Colt and other contractors to meet exact government requirements. When fitted with a GI NM barrel and bushing, a top-grade, accurate pistol resulted. But, now that the government has phased out most of its target-shooting competition, these supplies have dried up. The military match barrels were manufac-

Continued on page 92

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Jeff Cooper Authorized

Jeff Cooper: M.A.-UCLA, B.A.-Stanford, writer, college professor, founder and combat master Southwest Pistol League, founder and director American Pistol Institute, founder and honorary lifetime Chairman International Practical Shooting Confederation, former United States Marine Colonel, and the most internationally renowned and knowledgeable combat pistolcraft instructor in the world.

JEFF COOPER'S BREN TEN INITIAL ISSUE COMMEMORATIVE — pays tribute to and honors the distinguished career of the father of modern combat pistolcraft — JEFF COOPER, and marks the kick-off of the production of the most desired pistol ever made — THE BREN TEN 10MM AUTO.

DESCRIPTION

This exquisitely crafted piece is a fully functional, finely tuned, commemorative combat pistol. It has all of the features of a standard production model Bren Ten including selective double/single action, reversible thumb safety, and replaceable front sight, plus all of the custom features that Jeff Cooper has personally and expressly designated for this pistol. The superb stainless steel frame and blue steel slide have been highly polished to a mirror-like finish, with specially selected detailing meticulously crafted in 22k gold plate. To compliment our heritage, this fine pistol is completely made in America. A special manufacturer's seal will be placed on each commemorative after it has been personally inspected and test-fired by Jeff Cooper, with a registered serial number coordinated certificate of authenticity. Each commemorative is presented in its own custom fitted, hand-rubbed, specially selected dark wood presentation chest, lined with rich, plush, deep burgundy velvet, with the owner's name inscribed on the ensconced custom plaque within. To further enrich this issue, twelve deactivated 22k gold plated, 10mm auto cartridges are included.

AVAILABILITY & SHIPMENT

Orders are now being accepted on a first come, first served basis. Requests for specific serial numbers will be honored if available; otherwise, you will be assigned a serial number as your order is received. Once the minimum subscription level, necessary to justify production time, has been reached, production will begin. Two hundred of these fine pistols are scheduled to be produced per week, with shipments directly from our exclusive commemorative dealer, Gun Finders, Phoenix, Arizona. Because we have no control over how fast orders will be sent in, we cannot guarantee a specific delivery date. Although we will do everything within our power to deliver the commemoratives in a timely manner, we will not sacrifice quality and care in craftsmanship for a little time.

ASSURANCE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To guarantee commemorative production, all funds are to be sent directly to Sunwest Bank, where they will be deposited and held in a special Trust Account. The funds cannot be released until the necessary minimum subscription level is reached. If, for any reason, the minimum subscription level is not reached, then 100% of the subscriber's funds will be returned directly by the Bank. Upon receipt of your order, you will receive a formal acknowledgement package which will include your assigned serial number, a bank document showing your funds have been deposited in the Trust Account, a special discount coupon, a copy of "Jeff Cooper on Handguns," and much more.

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Charge Card Plan: Charge your order on either VISA or MasterCard. Send your order directly to Sunwest Bank for processing. Indicate: Card charged, account number, expiration date, and your signature.

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This is the only production pistol ever to bear Jeff Cooper's name. It is a special one-time issue, and when fully subscribed will never be available again, with production strictly limited to 2,000 pistols. This is the ultimate, absolute top-of-the-line, commemorative combat pistol. If there was ever one commemorative to get, this is it.

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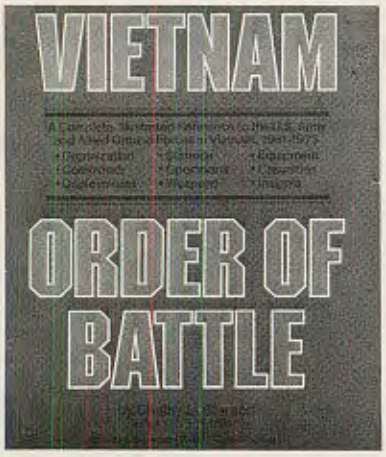
IN REVIEW



VIETNAM ORDER OF BATTLE. By Shelby L. Stanton. Washington, D.C.: U.S. News Books. 1981. 416 pp. 200 photos. 25 maps. $49.95. Review by William M. Brooks.

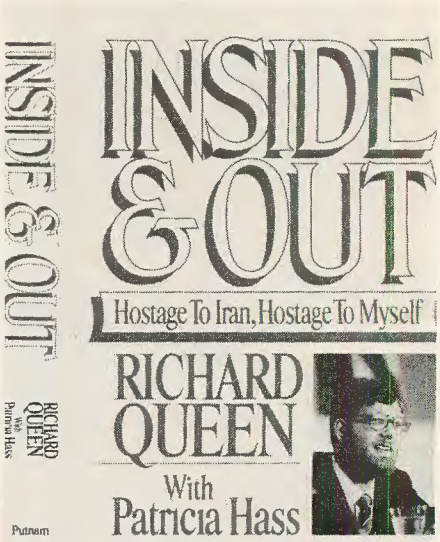
SHELBY L. Stanton served six years as an infantry officer during the Vietnam conflict, first with the 3rd Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, then with the 5th Special Forces Group and 20th Engineer Brigade. Today he is chief Vietnam editor for the *International Military Encyclopedia*. He has also published articles in *Strategy and Tactics* and *Soldier of Fortune* (see "MACVSOG Equipment and Weapons," SOF, June '81, p. 45).

In the words of Gen. William Westmoreland, "**Vietnam Order of Battle** is a work of rare commemorative and historical value." Here is the complete, illustrated reference to U.S. Army, Marine and allied ground forces in Vietnam. Its detail is astounding.

Vietnam Order of Battle covers the entire organization, structure and operations of U.S. and allied ground forces in Vietnam from 1961 to 1973. It documents every major unit stationed in Vietnam with critical data on their tours of service, including official unit designation, unit function, dates of arrival and departure, unit location, authorized strength, previous station, table of organization and equipment and distinctive insignia.

This volume also brings together a complete, full-color collection of more than 400 distinctive unit insignias, to include every authorized insignia worn during the Vietnam War. Also included is a photo collection of more than 100 primary vehicles and weapons used by the U.S. Army and Marines in Vietnam. A list of Medal of Honor recipients during the Vietnam conflict is also given.

For anyone with an interest in the Vietnam War — veterans, military enthusiasts, researchers, modelers, historians — **Vietnam Order of Battle** is an indispensable diary that provides a complete, factual record of a unique war.



INSIDE & OUT: Hostage To Iran, Hostage To Myself. By Richard Queen with Patricia Hess. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons. 1981. 286 pp. $13.95. Review by M.L. Jones.

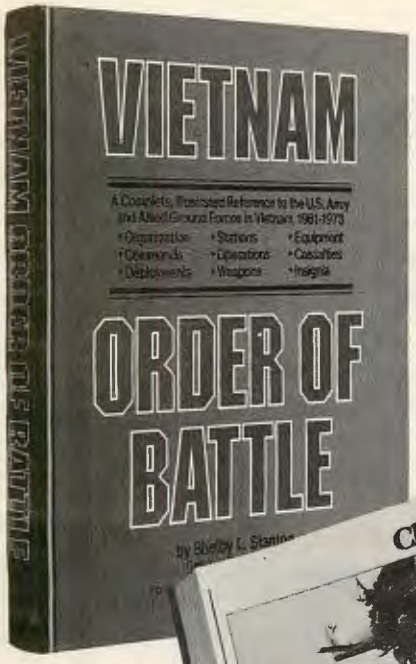
INSIDE & Out is of interest because it is the first account of one hostage's survival in Iran. Richard Queen is the young American diplomat who was released from captivity six months before the hostage drama ended in January 1981. His incompetent Iranian jailors were unable to diagnose the disease (multiple sclerosis) from which he was suffering — and they were afraid of adverse publicity if he died while in their clutches.

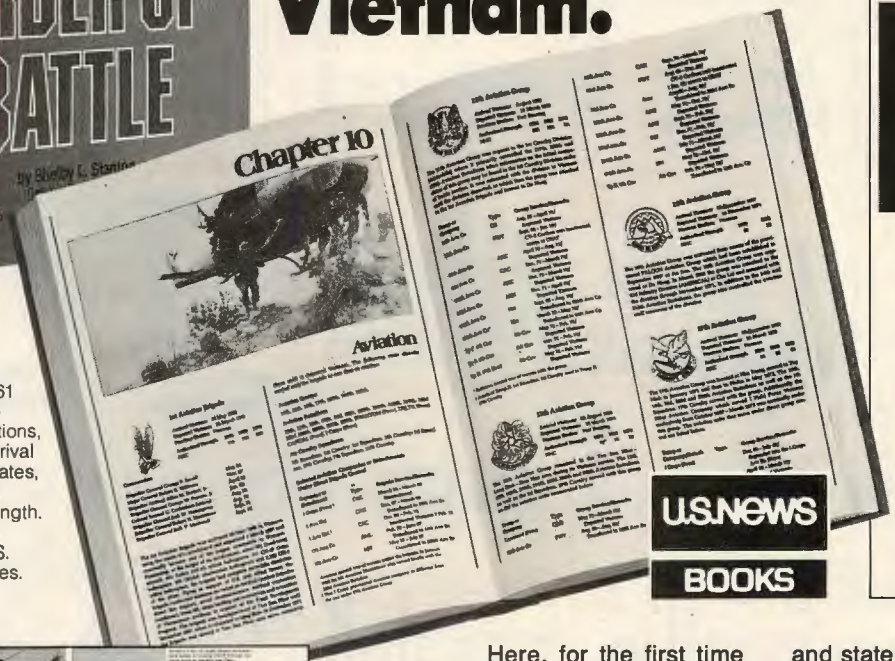
In his book, Queen reveals for the first time that their Iranian captors staged a mock execution just after midnight on 7 February 1980 when he and several other American hostages were dragged into the room where, six weeks earlier, TV cameras had recorded their first Christmas in captivity. He writes: "I heard a sudden, metallic click as the masked men locked the bolts on their rifles....None of the Americans cried, no one begged, no one asked for mercy. Just the terrible silence." But nothing happened. They were dragged away, one by one, back to the rooms which had become their prison cells.

Told in a flat style that is perhaps appropriate to the events which it chronicles, **Inside & Out** could be considered a survival manual. Since brainwashing was introduced in the Korean War, the wise serviceman has added the technique of survival despite mind manipulation to his training. Richard Queen's book yields some valuable pointers to this tactic.

New from U.S.News Books!

The definitive reference to the U.S. Army and Allied ground forces in Vietnam.





Unit Listings. The definitive listing of every U.S. Army unit in Vietnam from 1961 through 1973, including designations, type, insignia, arrival and departure dates, previous station, location and strength. Special sections include other U.S. services and Allies.

Introduction by William C. Westmoreland. The Senior Commander of the U.S. and Allied Forces in Vietnam from 1964 through 1968, General Westmoreland comments: "The *Vietnam Order of Battle* is a work of rare commemorative and historical value. The encyclopedic detail is unequaled for any war in which the U.S. Army has engaged. There is no comparable order of battle even for World War II. It has made a major contribution to the history of a unique war and a troubled era."

Vehicles, Armaments and Weapons. A special 50-page photo section includes displays of fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, helicopter armament, artillery, small weapons, vessels and support vehicles used in the Vietnam conflict.

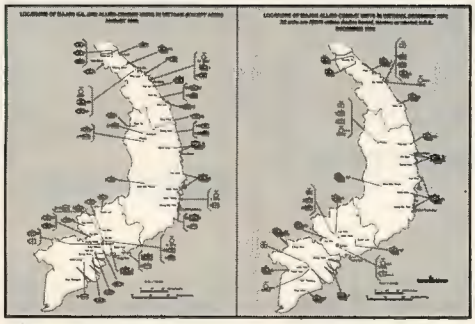
Here, for the first time anywhere, is a complete, authoritative Order of Battle on the war in Vietnam—a one-of-a-kind data base for military historians, researchers, educators, libraries, collectors, modelers, veterans, and weapons, insignia, uniform and war strategy enthusiasts.

Compiled over seven years by Shelby L. Stanton, Captain, U.S. Army, Retired, the 416-page compendium covers the entire organization and structure of U.S. ground forces in Vietnam; major commands and key operations; divisions; infantry and airborne brigades; combat support, service and special units; deployments and stations; casualties by type, rank and state; Medal of Honor recipients; even a glossary of troop slang. Primary emphasis is given to listing all units (down to company level) that served, both American and Allied, their terms of service, location, stations, authorized strength, command relationship, functions and major missions.

The *Vietnam Order of Battle* is an encyclopedic, illustrated reference to the entire state of American and Allied Forces in Vietnam during the years of conflict, 1961 to 1973. There is no other publication like it available from any military, governmental or private source.

SPECIFICATIONS: Measures 9½ by 12¼ inches • Contains 416 pages • Features more than 65 pages of photographs, 32 in full color

Distinctive Insignia. A 32-page section presents the only complete collection of color photographs of actual insignia and badges worn in Vietnam—430 in all. Includes authorized and unauthorized insignia, special skills and foreign badges. Many new, lost, rare or never before published.



Strategic Maps. More than two dozen maps detail major Allied tactical and support elements, troop deployments and unit locations.

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*(NOTE: Bayonet adapter for rifle is separate. See item no. SI-20.)

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SI-1A

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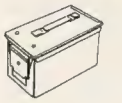

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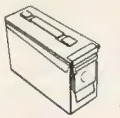

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(not shown) SI-19

New COLT AR-15/M16 Bayonet with M8A1 Scabbard

Blade length 6½." Features wire cutter, belt attachment, sure-grip handle and tie thongs.

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SI-20

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G-3 Adapter for SI-12, SI-13 and SI-14 for attachment of bayonet to rifle.

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SI-23

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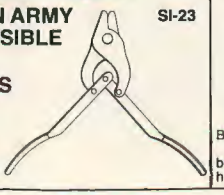

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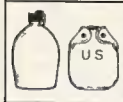

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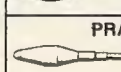

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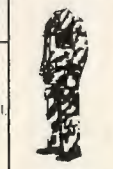

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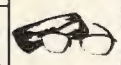

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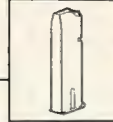

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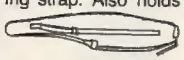

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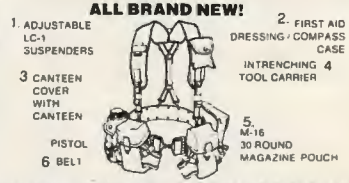

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I WAS THERE

by Don Pugsley as told to M.L. Jones

A 1969 helicopter crash sent Don Pugsley home after only three months in Vietnam, where he was serving as a medic with the Fifth Special Forces Group on Project Delta. When Pugsley arrived in-country, Delta was working the Central Highlands around Kontum. As he tells it:

AFTER three weeks in 'Nam, I had yet to lose my "cherry"' status. When I'd arrived I was a well-trained but unseasoned Special Forces aidman and so I was the low man of a team of five medics and got all the scut work — like on the night when, at 0300 hours, a damaged gunship landed in our compound. Its mini-gun had disintegrated in action and my orders were to pick the metal slivers out of the door gunner's butt.

When I finished with the tweezers, the sun was up and a new day had begun. It started with sick calls for our unit and a nearby Montagnard village, followed by building chopper revetments, and ended with unloading a C-130. We finished late in the afternoon and I took advantage of my few free moments to grab some shuteye in the dispensary tent.

I was dozing off when the tent was rocked by an explosion. Too tired to be afraid and too ignorant to differentiate incoming from out-going, I decided the blast came from the arty unit next door.

Sgt. McDonald rushed into the tent, bellowing, "What the hell are you doing? We're taking rounds! Get off your ass and over to your station!"

He didn't have to tell me twice. Two more rounds shook the ground as I jumped out of the rack, grabbed my aid kit and beat feet. My destination was the Recon sergeant's bunker waaaaay over on the other side of the camp. I had to cover a good quarter of a mile of open terrain.

As I chugged along, I scanned the horizon for signs of enemy fire. Sure enough, plumes of rocket smoke erupted from the mountains, first one and then two more. They were commie surface-to-surface missiles, big bastards, nine feet long and 122mm wide. I stood out like a tick on a pig's rump. My first thought was to dive into the nearest hole. But I kept on running, picking up speed, all the time watching the contrails in the sky.

The first rocket peaked and started coming in, and soon I heard the roar of its motor. I ran faster. The missile slammed to earth a hundred yards away, taking out an ARVN barracks. Wood, shingles and dirt clods rained around me.

I kept on running.

I could see two sergeants in the bunker doorway egging me on, though I didn't need their cheers to keep me moving. Right overhead the second two rockets were screaming in, much closer than the first.

I lunged for the safety of the bunker just as their blasts went off behind me. The shrapnel missed me but the concussion picked me up and catapulted me into the dugout.

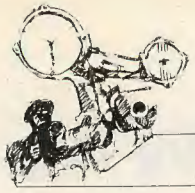
I hit the steps on my ass, then tumbled ankles over elbows, landing sprawled like a bear rug on the bunker floor. While the men har-de-har'ed, one of the sergeants toasted me with his coffee cup:

"Welcome to Vietnam, son," he grinned. "Welcome to Vietnam."

IF you have a combat or adventure story for "It Happened to Me" or "I Was There," triple-space type it and send it to SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, Attn: M.L. Jones. All stories should be 500 words or less. Upon publication, SOF will become owner of all publication rights. Submitted articles are subject to editing and revision, although their content and theme will not be changed.

Photos (with captions and credits) are also helpful. Captions should be typed on a separate sheet of paper and keyed to each photograph.

Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope so we can notify you of acceptance or return your story. Article payment is $50, upon publication. All entrants will receive an SOF patch.



FLAK

Continued from page 8

FROM RAIN TO PJs . . .

Sirs:

Never have I enjoyed a magazine as much as yours! My appreciation increased (if that's possible) after watching ABC News Closeup's "Rain of Terror" about Russian chemical warfare in Cambodia, Laos, etc. You reported on that subject in depth in the January '82 issue. It is pathetic that the United States turns a blind eye to this situation and does nothing until Mother Russia just about rubs our nose in it. You, on the other hand, do not worry about offending the Russians and their associated cronies (in fact, I think you delight in it!) and give us, the readers, the pure facts.

I also enjoyed your article about the PJs ("First Aid from Above," SOF, February '82) especially, since I served with the 54th ARRS stationed at Pease AFB, N.H., and also saw them (the PJs) in action when stationed at Cam Rahn Bay.

Keep up the good, nay, excellent work and "Death to Tyrants."

Sincerely,
Your lifetime subscriber,
George Jakubowicz
Clinton, Massachusetts

You're right, we're delighted to do it. Believe the facts. — The Eds.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER . . .

Sirs:

In reference to your article in the February issue on the Soviet grenade launcher, p. 46: In that article you stated that the United States has no comparable system. Though this is true now, next year the Marines and Army are supposed to deploy our own automatic grenade launcher. It has been designated the MK-19. It fires our standard 40mm linked round and is blowback-operated. Its cyclic rate is 350 to 400 rpm. It has an effective range of 1600 meters. With a weight of 75.6 pounds, it can be mounted in the door of a chopper or on a jeep or APC. It can also be mounted on a tripod. This just goes to show anything commies can do we can do better.

Sincerely,
Colin R. Bullard
Valparaiso, Indiana

No doubt about it — you're right! Let's get the MK-19 to the men in the field! — The Eds.

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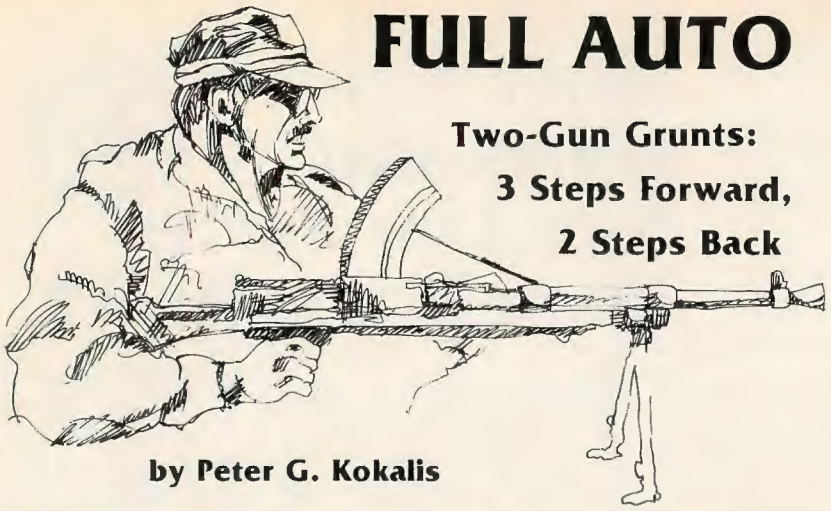

FULL AUTO

Two-Gun Grunts: 3 Steps Forward, 2 Steps Back

by Peter G. Kokalis

More than 20 years after the Soviet Union introduced the BTR-60 armored fighting vehicle (followed by the excellent BMP series), America's response in the form of the M2 Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) finally looms on the foreseeable horizon. Test models should be at Army ordnance proving grounds by now.

The main armament of the IFV is the M242 Hughes Chain Gun, a motor-driven 25mm auto cannon using linkless ammo. Mounted coaxially with the M242 will be the M240 (FN MAG) general-purpose machine gun in caliber 7.62mm NATO. If it is finally decided to mount another machine gun in the rear of the vehicle on a pintle mount, it will be the M60. The M60 is, of course, still the U.S. Army's standard squad automatic. When fighting outside the vehicle, the M60 would be detached from the pintle and carried with the troops.

New 5.56mm NATO M231 Firing Port Weapon. Photo: Peter G. Kokalis

Nearly all Soviet armored personnel carriers and BMP infantry combat vehicles are equipped with ports from which small arms can be fired. The U.S. Army's experience in Vietnam demonstrated this to be a valuable design characteristic. All too often, ambushed M113 APCs were unable to deliver effective suppressive fire. The M2 Infantry Fighting Vehicle contains six ballistically protected ports — two on each side and two in the rear.

Now, here's the rub. These firing ports do not accept the standard issue M16A1 rifle. Instead, they utilize the new 5.56mm NATO M231 Firing Port Weapon.

A rather obvious spin-off of the M16 series (see photo), and in fact utilizing some Colt parts, the M231 incorporates some startling innovations. The M231 fires from the open bolt and has no hammer. Which is to say that the bolt assembly is seared to the rear just as in the M3A1 submachine gun ("Grease Gun"). Having no sights of any kind, the M231 utilizes tracer ammo exclusively. The gunner must aim by looking through a periscope above the firing port in order to observe the path of the tracer projectiles.

The M231 has a cyclic rate of 1300 rounds per minute, almost twice that of the M16A1 (700 rpm). This extremely high cyclic rate was not a design specification, but a consequence of two important design characteristics: 1) the gas port is much closer to the breech than that of the M16, enabling a greater portion of the barrel to protrude from the firing port; and 2) the recoil system uses three very strong nested driving springs for reliable functioning.

Weight of the M231 is 8.5 pounds empty and 9.5 pounds with a loaded 30-round magazine. Overall length with the buttstock retracted is 28.4 inches and 32.9 inches with the stock extended.

The M231 uses a sliding wire stock similar to the M3A1 submachine gun and presumably embraces the same defects. The weapon features an extremely short handguard ending in the special gas block which contains steep spiral threads so that the M231 may be attached or removed quickly from the firing port, in one turn or less, to provide covering fire in a defensive situation. How effective this function would be using a wire-stocked, totally sightless, 1300-rpm-cyclic-rate, 9.5-pound weapon is debatable, however.

Since the troops inside the IFV will commonly be expected to fight outside the vehicle as well, the implications of this strange stew should be apparent to everyone. The six M231 gunners will certainly have to be issued M16A1s as well! Thus we end up, inside one vehicle among one squad of men, with two entirely different general-purpose machine guns in caliber 7.62mm NATO, and two entirely different assault rifles in caliber 5.56mm NATO, one of which is exclusively dependent on tracer ammunition. Enough said.

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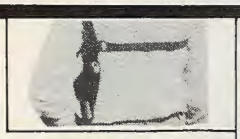

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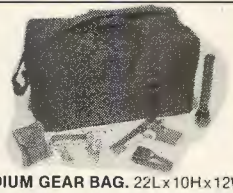

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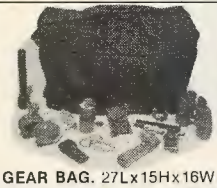

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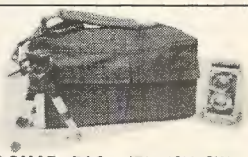

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A MAN FOR ALL WARS

Sweeny of The Legion

by Maj. John S. Arvidson

Yank SOF Charles Sweeny at age 58, when he was RAF group captain in charge of organizing and recruiting 71, 121 and 133 Eagle Squadrons. Photo: Imperial War Museum

AS light rain fell on England's Debden fighter station, a formation of Royal Air Force Squadrons 71, 121 and 133 personnel listened attentively to Air Chief Marshal Sir W. Sholto Douglas, commander-in-chief of RAF Fighter Command:

"We of Fighter Command deeply regret this parting, for in the course of the past 18 months we have seen the stuff of which you are made, and we could not ask for better companions with whom to see this fight through to a finish. The United States Army Air Corps' gain is very much the Royal Air Force's loss. The loss of the *Luftwaffe* will no doubt continue as before."

It was 29 September 1942; the pilots in that formation were Yank air mercs, members of the famed Eagle Squadrons who, while in British service, downed 73½ enemy aircraft. Their units were being transferred to the 4th Fighter Group, U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF), the only U.S. air group formed entirely of Americans who had served in a foreign air force. On that day, No. 71 (Eagle) Squadron, RAF, under Yank Squadron Leader Gregory Augustus Daymond, Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and Bar, became the USAAF 334th Fighter Squadron; No. 121, under Yank Squadron Leader William James Daley, DFC, the USAAF 335th Fighter Squadron; and No. 133, under Yank Squadron Leader Carrol Warren McColpin, DFC, the USAAF 336th Fighter Squadron.

The new USAAF 4th Fighter Group, officially nicknamed the "Eagles," made history in WWII, the Korean War and Vietnam. As part of the USAAF in WWII, the Eagles destroyed 1,052½ enemy aircraft (583½ in the air and 469 on the ground), more than any other

USAAF fighter group. During the Korean War, the Group destroyed 506 communist MiGs in aerial combat. Detached squadrons of the 4th Fighter Group also saw combat in Vietnam.

This is not their story, however, but that of the founder of the Eagles, one of America's greatest soldiers of fortune: Charles Michael Sweeny, who began WWII as a general in the French Foreign Legion, continued it as an RAF group captain in British service, and ended it as an officer in the USAAF. Col. Charles Sweeny fought in 10 wars under 10 different flags.

Professional fighting men around the globe during the 1920s and 1930s knew him as "Sweeny of the Legion" — and his name was legendary. Sweeny began his fighting career at 16, enlisting in the U.S. Army for combat in the Spanish-American War. When that war ended, Sweeny enrolled at the University of Notre Dame. On 19 June 1900, he was admitted to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point by Presidential appointment but, after a turbulent cadetship, resigned from West Point on 24 December 1903. His philosophy as a fighter differed from that of the regular-army peacetime officers' corps. Turning south to Latin America, Charles Sweeny launched his illustrious career as a professional adventurer and mercenary *par excellence.*

Born the son of a millionaire in San Francisco on 26 January 1882, Charles Sweeny had access to a huge fortune taken from the famous Coeur d'Alene mines — but he took to soldiering around the world for the fun of fighting. His second and third wars were Honduran and Venezuelan insurgencies in which he supplied arms, and trained and led troops. Sweeny was investigating the mining industry, attired in native garb, when his path crossed that of Gen. Giuseppe "Peppino" Garibaldi in Mexico. An Australian-born Italian soldier of fortune and grandson of the liberator of Italy, Garibaldi was revolutionary leader Francisco Madero's chief of staff. Sweeny suddenly found himself caught up in the revolution, and in 1911 he entered his fourth war as part of Madero's Mexican revolutionary army. After the capture of Ciudad Juarez, Madero was installed as Mexico's new head of state, and Charles Sweeny headed for new adventures in France.

The outbreak of WWI in August 1914 found Charles Sweeny at the head of a group of Americans eager to join the French Foreign Legion in Paris. Before their enlistment, Sweeny gave them preliminary military training. As the first American to enlist in the French Foreign Legion in WWI, Charles Sweeny advanced rapidly through the NCO ranks and was selected for officer's training at the *Ecole de Militaire.* He became the first American to be commissioned in the French Foreign Legion.

Charles Sweeny distinguished himself as a combat leader and fighter in the bloody Western Front trench warfare. He was promoted from lieutenant to lieutenant-colonel by 1917 — the only American to reach that rank in the Legion. Wounded on two occasions in Legion assaults, he was awarded the Commander of the Legion of Honour, *Croix de Guerre, Croix du Combattant* and other French decorations and medals for his WWI service. Of the 1,000 Americans who fought in the French Foreign Legion during WWI, Charles Sweeny made perhaps the greatest impression on the French War Office, whose doors remained open to him until the fall of France in the summer of 1940.

Although his Legion infantry battalion was noted for its dash in assaults and trench raids in the blood-soaked mud near Belloy, Charles Sweeny looked to the blue skies overhead and saw in air warfare a bright future for mercenaries. The lean, mean, tough Legion officer had heard of the efforts of his fellow Americans, Norman Prince, Bert Hall, William Thaw, Elliott Cowdin, Victor Chapman, Kiffin Rockwell and James MacConnell, to form an all-American squadron in the French *l'Aviation Militaire.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maj. John S. Arvidson (USAR, Ret.) has been involved in Army intelligence work since the mid-'40s. In 1950, as a result of his intelligence work, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Army. During Korea he served as commanding officer of the 27th Raiders, U.S. Army, and in the late '50s he worked as a regimental intelligence officer of the 442nd Infantry Regiment.

Maj. Arvidson is no stranger to readers to SOF. For other examples of his research see "First Yank SOF in Rhodesia," SOF, February '79, and "French Foreign Legion Update," May '79. —S. Max

Using his influence as a field-grade Legion officer, Sweeny joined Dr. Edmund L. Gros, Col. Thomas Bentley Mott and New York attorney Frederick H. Allen in their effort to convince the French government to pass a special law enabling Americans to be received into *l'Aviation Militaire* after administrative enlistment in the French Foreign Legion. On 8 July 1915, Gen. Hirschauer, chief of *l'Aviation Militaire,* accepted the idea. The Franco-American Flying Corps was later renamed the Lafayette Flying Corps (LFC). *Escadrille Lafayette* N. 124 (except for its commander and his assistant) was the only all-American squadron.

During WWI, a total of 267 American SOFs entered the French *l'Aviation Militaire,* many of them through the efforts of Col. Charles Sweeny. Of that number, 180 flew in combat on the various fighting fronts. These American air mercs shot down 199 enemy aircraft at the cost of 55 KIA, 19 WIA and 15 POW. When the United States entered WWI, 93 pilots of the LFC transferred to the USAAS, 26 transferred to U.S. Naval Aviation and 33 continued to fly with the French *l'Aviation Militaire.*

Lt. Col. Charles Sweeny transferred from the French Foreign Legion to the U.S. Army, stepping down one rank to major. By 1918, Sweeny was promoted to lieutenant colonel again and assigned to the U.S. 80th "Pine Ridge" Division, which spearheaded the attack against the Hindenburg Line. He became an expert in tank warfare, gaining the nickname, "Sweeny of the tanks." While leading the 80th Division's first assault wave, Sweeny received his third WWI wound, bringing the total number of times he had been shot to seven. Sweeny remained on the battlefield, and the 80th Division smashed through the German field fortifications at a cost of nearly 6,000 casualties. Sweeny's fifth war ended on 11 November 1918. He declined to serve in the peacetime U.S. Army and was discharged in 1919.

That year Poland was fighting for its freedom against communist Russia. In France, Gen. Haller of Poland was raising a force of several divisions. Col. Sweeny renewed his friendship with French Gen. Maxime Weygand, hoping to join a French military mission going to Poland. Instead, he was commissioned a brigadier general in the Polish army and given command of a division in Gen. Haller's army. Charles Sweeny entered his sixth war. While Sweeny and his division distinguished themselves at the decisive battle of Warsaw in 1921, under the overall command of Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, other Yank air mercs flew in the 7th Kosciuszko Squadron (see "Flight of the White Eagles," SOF, August, September '80).

At Warsaw, the Bolsheviks were completely routed. Sweeny's division and the Yank air mercs played vital roles in halting the Soviet Union's first offensive thrust into free Europe. Reporting from Poland, Pulitzer Prize-winning correspondent Walter Duranty described Sweeny as "one of the only two fearless men I have ever known." After the Russian defeat and the signing of peace between Poland and the Soviet Union, Sweeny left the Polish army near the end of 1921 and returned to Paris for a brief rest. In 1922, he departed for Turkey, joining the Turkish Revolutionary Army. This was Sweeny's seventh war under a seventh flag.

The Turkish Revolutionary Army was fighting Greek invaders in Anatolia. It was led by Kemal Ataturk, formerly

known as Mustapha Kemal Pasha, the Turkish general who defeated the British at Gallipoli, fought for a modern Turkish republic and overthrew the Turkish government.

Charles Sweeny immediately commanded his peers' respect. He arrived in Turkey with a shipment of French-supplied artillery and aircraft. The British and French had initially supported the Greek invasion of Turkey, but France soon had second thoughts, and Sweeny converted those thoughts into action. Col. Sweeny and his fellow mercenaries showed Kemal Ataturk's soldiers how to use their new weapons. Kemal Ataturk soon began scoring important victories with Sweeny's assistance. Smyrna was recaptured in 1922, amid great slaughter. The Greeks sought peace. In 1923, Sweeny again returned to Paris, a hero of the Turkish revolution and a legend to international mercenaries.

In 1925, Abd-el-Krim and his Rif rebels struck south from all-but-conquered Spanish Morocco to invade French Morocco, wiping out 43 of 66 French Foreign Legion border posts in the process (see "Morocco's Murderous Marauders," SOF, March '81). In Paris, the doors of the French War Office swung open for Charles Sweeny and he was quickly commissioned a colonel in the French air force to raise a squadron of American volunteers, the *Escadrille Cherifienne,* activated in July 1925. It consisted of 17 Americans and several French pilots. Among the 12 American pilots were "Doc" Sparks, a flying dentist who preferred fighting to pulling teeth; Curt Day, a lieutenant in Sweeny's group; and Charles Kerwood and Austin Parker, WWI veterans of the LFC. One of the French pilots was Sadi Lecointe, who established the world's altitude record of 36,565 feet at Issy-les-Moulineaux, France, on 30 October 1923. The ground crew of the *Escadrille Cherifienne* was entirely French. Pay for the pilots was the equivalent of $40 a month — mostly paid out of the pocket of Robert Sweeny, Charles' millionaire brother. (Charles Sweeny had been disinherited by his father many years earlier and cut out of his will.)

Col. Sweeny was ground commander and Yank SOF Maj. Granville Pollock, late of the Lafayette Flying Corps, was air commander. Gen. Armengaud, commander-in-chief of the French air force and an old drinking companion of Sweeny, was the colonel's direct superior in Morocco. Equipped with 10 WWI-vintage Breguet 14B-2 biplane bombers, Sweeny's squadron also served as the Sultanate of Morocco's air force — under French air-force operational control.

Col. Charles Sweeny never learned to fly — although he was associated with air mercenary activities from WWI with the *Escadrille Lafayette* through WWII with the Eagle Squadrons. Consequent-

Gregory "Pappy" Boyington shot down six Japanese planes while serving with American Volunteer Group. After leaving AVG he resumed career as Marine Corps pilot, and won the Medal of Honor in Central Solomons, leading Marine Fighter Squadron (VMH) 214, better known as famed "Black Sheep." Photo: Wideworld

ANGELS, WITH OR WITHOUT WINGS

The Aerial Exploits of the American Volunteer Group, 1941-42

By F.C. Brown

The American Volunteer Group (AVG), better known to the world at large as the "Flying Tigers," provided the one bright spot in the war in the Pacific during the bleak days following Pearl Harbor and on into the spring of 1942. Led by Claire Lee Chennault, a tough, hard-driving ex-Army Air Corps captain from Waterproof, La., the "Tigers" — some 70 American fliers with no more than 55 planes — rolled up a score of 286 Japanese aircraft destroyed and an estimated 1,500 enemy airmen killed in air battles over Burma and South China, at a cost of fewer than 25 American lives. Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of the generalissimo and China's national secretary for aviation, referred to the men of the AVG as her "angels, with or without wings." The Japanese, enraged by the unorthodox tactics employed by the AVG, preferred to call them "American renegades."

The genesis of the American Volunteer Group goes back to early 1941 when Gen. P.T. Mow, Chinese Air Force, and Claire Chennault, then serving as a colonel in the Chinese Air Force, came to the United States to create an organization capable of ending Japanese air supremacy in the skies over China. After months of negotiating, an agreement was concluded with the U.S. government, creating the AVG. Release of U.S. military pilots for service in China was authorized by Executive Order in April 1941. Volunteers from the U.S. Army Air Corps, the Navy and the Marines were recruited; by early summer of 1941 some 100 pilots and more than 200 ground-support personnel were under contract. Pilots were signed on at $600 a month, with flight leaders getting $675 and squadron leaders $750. The Chinese government also agreed to pay a bonus of $500 for each Japanese plane destroyed — upon presentation of indisputable proof. The ground crew workers, depending on their qualifications and experience, received $150 to $350 a month.

In July 1941 advance elements of the AVG, traveling in mufti to throw off Japanese spies, departed from San Francisco for the long sea voyage to the Far East. The first shipment of Curtiss P-40B Tomahawks, obsolete aircraft but the only ones available, arrived in Rangoon, Burma, not long afterward, and training was underway by September. Initially, the AVG shared the Kyedaw training field at Toungoo, Burma, about 175 miles north of Rangoon, with elements of the British Royal Air Force.

The AVG first rose to meet the Japanese on 20 December 1941, when enemy twin-engined bombers attacked the city of Kunming, China. Of the 10 attacking aircraft, AVG personnel sent six crashing earthward in flames. On 23 December, AVG Tomahawks — operating out of Mingaladon, Burma, with the RAF — intercepted Japanese bombers raiding Rangoon. AVG pilots shot down six (confirmed) and the RAF downed

four more. While four of the AVG Tomahawks were also downed, two of the pilots were later rescued unharmed. RAF losses in this encounter were five planes and pilots (KIA).

Christmas Day 1941 proved to be a bonanza for the AVG. Initially, 12 Tomahawks took on a combination of 78 Japanese fighters and bombers, downing 17. Two Tomahawks were also shot down, but the pilots survived and were subsequently rescued. In the second engagement of that day, 108 Japanese bombers and escorting fighters attacked Rangoon. The RAF downed eight Japanese aircraft but suffered a loss of five of their own. The AVG managed to shoot down another 28 enemy planes against a loss of two of their own. Again, both AVG pilots survived and were rescued.

By 24 January 1942, the AVG had destroyed a total of 64 Japanese aircraft of all types (confirmed) in the air, plus an additional 11 on the ground. AVG losses for the same period were three KIAs in battle and two on the ground. Barely two weeks later, on 6 February 1942, AVG pilots flying in defense of Rangoon claimed their 100th Japanese plane.

Chinese Air Force wings worn by American Volunteer Group pilots. Photo: Frank Brown Collection

In March 1942, as the ground situation in Burma deteriorated, the AVG was forced to abandon Rangoon and subsequently moved to Magwe. A short time later they were again forced to move, this time to Loiwing, across the border in China. The advancing Japanese necessitated a final move to Kunming, where all three AVG pursuit squadrons — the 1st: "Adam and Eves"; the 2nd: "Panda Bears"; the 3rd: "Hell's Angels" — fought as a single entity. As the AVG turned its attention to the skies over Hengyang and Kweilin, the casualty lists of the Japanese Air Force continued to mount.

When the AVG was disbanded in the first week of July 1942, the Tigers had run up a score of 286 Japanese aircraft destroyed (confirmed), for which the Chinese government had paid bonuses of $500 per plane to individual AVG pilots. Another 300 Japanese planes were listed as probables — for which bonuses were not paid, since the wreckage lay strewn in the jungles and mountains and under the sea, and could not be indisputably confirmed.

On 4 July 1942, the American Volunteer Group was formally designated the China Air Task Force (CATF), a component of the U.S. 10th Air Force, the overall air unit for the CBI (China-Burma-India) Theater. Chennault, commissioned a general in the U.S. Army Air Corps, retained command. The CATF was in turn later designated the 14th Air Force and given the responsibility for China, with Chennault still holding the reins of command. The 10th Air Force retained responsibility for Burma and India.

Aside from confirming Chennault's tactical genius and holding open the vital Burma Road for months after it had been given up for lost, a major contribution of the Flying Tigers was in destroying the myth of Japanese invincibility in the air. While British and American defenses in the Far East reeled before the hammer-like blows of the Mikado's war machine, the AVG — outnumbered, underequipped and outclassed in the air — fought the Japanese, using unorthodox tactics, and won on nearly every occasion.

The American Volunteer Group ranks as one of the strangest ventures of the Second World War, and also stands as the most successful mercenary outfit of the 20th century. They were, as their biographer Russell Whelan noted, the "demigods of fighting China."

SALUTE TO THE FLYING TIGERS

You men of the American Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force have acquired a worldwide reputation for greatest courage. The splendid victories the Volunteer Group has won in the air are a glory that belongs to China and to America alike.

The record of what you have done shows that every one of you has been a match for thirty or more of the enemy. Your friends and relatives will undoubtedly have felt boundless pride and elation over your exploits. The blows you have struck at the Japanese will put you in the forefront of the Allied Forces fighting the aggressor. You have established a firm foundation for the campaign against lawlessness which China and America are united to wage. You have written in the history of this World War a remarkable page, the memory of which will live in our minds forever.

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek
28 February 1942

ly, he had a few stormy sessions with his subordinate and squadron air commander, Maj. Granville Pollock. Based in French Morocco, the *Escadrille Cherifienne* flew 470 sorties in bombing and observation missions and logged 653 air hours. The squadron was handled informally. There were no oaths of allegiance, no formal enlistments and no formal discharges.

Col. Sweeny's *Escadrille Cherifienne* initially rendered air support to French ground troops under Marshal Louis Hubert Lyautey, commander-in-chief of French forces in Morocco. The Yank squadron had an additional enemy besides the Rif rebels — the French Communist Party, which supported Abd-el-Krim. Jacques Doriot, leader of the French Communist Youth League and a decorated WWI veteran who received advanced agent training in Moscow, applied successful pressure to French Premier Paul Painleve, who also doubled as war minister, to remove bombsights from Sweeny's Breguet 14s.

In September 1925, Marshal Henri Philippe Petain replaced Marshal Lyautey and began an offensive against the Rifs. The *Escadrille Cherifienne* provided close air support to four advancing French Foreign Legion regiments which spearheaded this offensive. Legionnaires complained about Yank bombing accuracy, not realizing the *Cherifienne* squadron had no bombsights.

Jacques Doriot, the Communist agitator, was unpopular with Sweeny's fliers. He later became unpopular with his erstwhile comrades, since he left the French Communist Party in 1935 — and switched sides. During WWII, he became a mercenary officer in the French Volunteer Legion Against Bolshevism which fought with the German *Wehrmacht* against the Soviet Union. Doriot was KIA in 1945, when an RAF fighter strafed his car.

Sweeny's Yank air mercs bombed many targets, including Rif artillery (captured earlier from the Spanish army), entrenched Rif positions, fortified rebel villages and Abd-el-Krim's headquarters. Low-level strafing was a hazardous affair, many planes of the *Escadrille Cherifienne* returning with bullet holes. When the allegedly open city of Chaouen was bombed, Red agitators turned public opinion against Sweeny's squadron. Because more French air force squadrons were being assigned to Morocco, the *Escadrille Cherifienne* was disbanded in November 1925, having performed most efficiently under adverse conditions. Sweeny and his Yank mercs returned to Paris.

Abd-el-Krim's surrender on 26 May 1926 ended the Rif revolt as an organized rebellion, although Berber resistance continued until December 1934. This rebellion was Col. Sweeny's eighth

war, and the banner of the Sultanate of Morocco the eighth flag under which he served. For his efforts with the *Escadrille Cherifienne,* Sweeny was awarded the French *Croix de Guerre (theatre operative exterieure),* the French Colonial Medal, and the Moroccan Commander of *Ouissam Alonitte.* As a personal reward for valiant services rendered in a bloody, dirty campaign, Col. Sweeny was also given 32 wives by the Sultan of Morocco. ("Then his troubles really started," commented *Adventure Magazine* in a 1930 issue.)

When war clouds began to gather over Ethiopia in 1935, Sweeny was at his Paris base of operations. His closest friends included adventurers Col. Clifford Harmon, founder of the International League of Aviators and donor of the Harmon Trophy; Maj. Granville Pollock, his longtime associate in the Lafayette Flying Corps and the *Escadrille Cherifienne;* "Doc" Sparks, the 20th-century flying version of Tombstone's Doc Holliday; Vincent Minor Schmidt, an American WWI vet who served as an air merc in China in 1931 and 1932; Maj. Rene l'Hopital, Marshal Foch's former *aide de camp*; Jimmy Bach, a pioneer Yank pilot in the French LFC who later became an auto dealer on the Champs Elysees; Gen. Armengaud of the French *Armee de l'Air;* and Hilaire du Berrier, a Yank pilot and the youngest of the group.

When I met Hilaire du Berrier recently, he told me about the Paris coterie:

"Their fund of stories was bottomless, and I, the youngest of the lot, listened open-mouthed. It was inevitable that I should try to follow their footsteps. They were another breed. Their standards of dress and conduct were rigid. A war was referred to as a show. And only a member of the personally responsible class of Gentlemen — men who have never abrogated the law which holds that a soldier of fortune must be ever ready to risk his life for an abstraction — was acceptable by their standards.

"The day of ragged blue jeans, dirty sweat-shirts and unshaven faces was undreamed of by the men who followed wars with Sweeny. I wore striped trousers, a charcoal gray jacket with braided labels and a monocle the night they saw me off on the train for Marseilles and the boat to Djibouti, enroute for Abyssinia. Vincent Minor Schmidt was to join us later, after we formed a team in Addis Ababa."

Helped by Charles Sweeny and backed by the authority of Emperor Haile Selaisse and the Ethiopian government, du Berrier recruited a force of 12 merc pilots to assist Ethiopia in its hour of peril. He traveled to Africa after a delay in Monte Carlo (a matter of a duel with an Italian officer, concerning an insult to Mussolini). His fiancee, Miss Muriel Holt, a nurse from San Francisco, was to accompany the group as a medic. Most of du Berrier's pilots never appeared — and promised planes were never delivered to Ethiopia.

Due to this fiasco, Col. Sweeny declined to travel to Addis Ababa. Only four Yank air mercs were on hand when Benito Mussolini launched his 3 October 1935 invasion: Hilaire du Berrier; Vincent Minor Schmidt; "Colonel" Hubert Fauntleroy Julian, the "Black Eagle of Harlem"; and Col. John C. Robinson, the "Brown Condor of Chicago," a regular pilot of the tiny Ethiopian air force who flew a Potez-25 reconnaissance biplane. Hugh Olaf de Wet (grandson of the Boer general), an ex-RAF pilot, was another of du Berrier's planeless pilots. All of these men had to evade or escape capture by Italians when Addis Ababa fell on 5 May 1936.

With the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War on 18 July 1936, Sweeny's mercenaries again joined the show. Hilaire du Berrier and Hugh Olaf de Wet were eventually signed under contract as fighter pilots by the Spanish Republican government in the fall of 1936, flying Nieuport-Delage ND-52 sesquiplane fighters, whose top speed was about 160 mph. Vincent Schmidt was signed under contract by the Loyalists to fly a Marcel-Bloch night bomber. Approximately 24 Yank pilots flew combat missions with the Spanish Republican Air Force. As the number of Soviet pilots and Russian-trained Spanish pilots increased, Loyalist contracts for foreign pilots were not renewed.

In 1937, French Gen. Armengaud invited Col. Charles Sweeny to accompany him on a fact-finding mission to Spain

Hurricane Is of 71 Eagle Squadron "beat up" the field in traditional RAF style. After Eagles were activated, British dumped obsolete planes on them until August 1941, when they received Spitfires. Photo: Imperial War Museum

RIGHT: F/Lt. Gregory Augustus Daymond. Member of Eagle Squadron decorated many times for valor by RAF. Photo: Imperial War Museum

Members of Eagle Squadron have instruction in air-gunnery at RAF Flying Training School. Although all men were well-trained pilots, RAF gave them standardized training before they went into the air. Photo: Imperial War Museum

to report on the condition of the Spanish Loyalist army. Following publication of their joint report, Sweeny worked as an adviser to the Spanish Republican government in Spain. By February 1938, he was back in Paris, working as an agent of the Spanish Republican War Ministry, from an office set up by the Spanish Embassy at 61 Avenue Victor Emanuel. American pilots recruited by Sweeny for Spain in 1938 ended up serving on the ground as members of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion.

The Spanish Civil War was Sweeny's ninth war under a ninth flag. While working for the Spanish Republican government, he also was active in developing his own private mercenary air force with Hilaire du Berrier, recently returned from Spain, and Vincent Schmidt, the old China air merc. Sweeny wanted to form a small mercenary air force for possible use in China. Du Berrier told me:

"It was in the winter of 1936-37, after I got out of Spain, that we formed our private foreign legion of the air — a complete air force, from mechanics and armorers to fighter pilots and bomber pilots. Sweeny had a tip-off that there was going to be a war in China and he talked me into going ahead to sell the services of the lot of us."

Hilaire du Berrier was the front man for Sweeny's "foreign legion of the air," officially named *l'Escadrille Etrangere* (Foreign Squadron). Sweeny was to be ground commander and Col. Vincent Minor Schmidt air commander. Maj. Frederic Ives Lord, a Yank SOF credited with downing 23 enemy aircraft while flying with the RFC and RAF during WWI, joined the enterprise. Lord also flew in Mexico and piloted a Breguet 19 biplane bomber during the Spanish Civil War. When cash was not immediately forthcoming, he returned to America to earn money lecturing at left-wing rallies.

The *Escadrille Etrangere* was nicknamed the "Death-Head Squadron," and 40 American, British and French pilots announced they were ready to die at any time for any country — at the right price. Most of its members had fought in Spain. Aircraft were to be late-model two-seater Koolhoven F.K. 51 biplanes.

A booklet prepared by Hilaire du Berrier explained: "As specialists in defense of the air, the squadron would be a factor for peace. Its pilots join no army. They are an army, an army of air police responsible for their own results. The purpose of this organization is not to make war, but to enforce peace, to protect property and ensure liberty to all."

Col. Charles Sweeny never traveled to China. Vincent Schmidt returned to Paris, but Hilaire du Berrier remained in China for 10 years, switching from flying to intelligence operations.

In 1939, following Hitler's annexation of Austria, the Munich crisis, and Franco's victory in Spain, the doors of the French War Office again swung open to Charles Sweeny. He was given the temporary rank of major general in the French Foreign Legion so he could raise a brigade of American volunteers — one of two foreigners and the only American to reach general rank in the Legion; the other was Giuseppe "Peppino" Garibaldi, Sweeny's comrade-in-arms in 1911 Mexico, who in WWI led 6,000 Italian volunteers in some of the Legion's bloodiest fighting.

Sweeny began recruiting his American brigade shortly before WWII broke out. One of his recruits was John F. Hasey, an American adventurer who afterward served in the Free French Foreign

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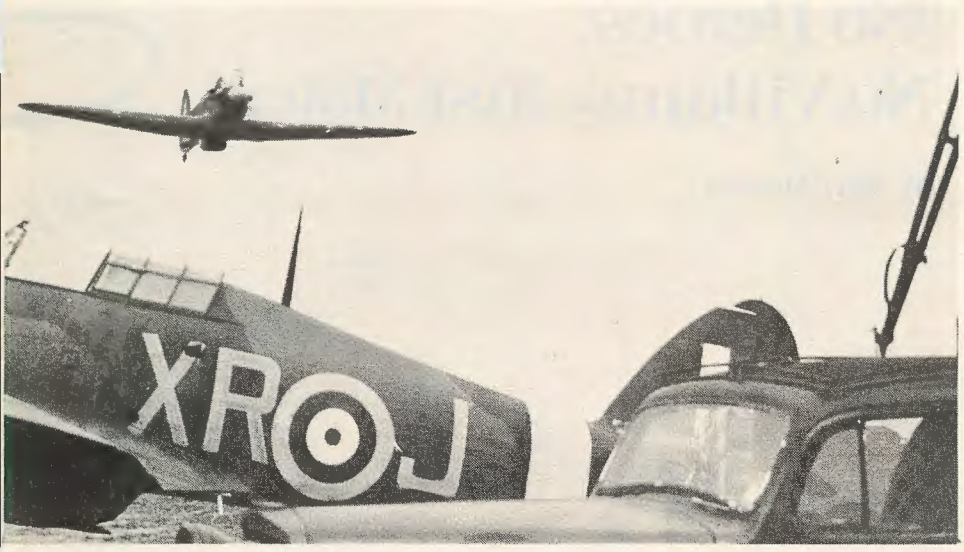


"FOREIGN DEVILS" IN CHINA: 14th SQUADRON

The 14th Volunteer Bombardment Squadron, often referred to as China's "International Squadron," was commanded by Vincent Minor Schmidt during Japan's undeclared war with China in 1937. Yank SOFs in the 14th Volunteer Bombardment Squadron included Elwyn H. Gibbon, an ex-USAAC pilot; Jim Allison, who flew in Spain; George H. Weigle and Lyman Voelpel, ex-commercial pilots; Watson, a bomb expert; C.C. "Sibie" Smith, chief mechanic; Dudley Long, mechanic; Tommy Allen of New York City, rear gunner; and mercs from other countries including William Labussiere, a French SOF who had downed five Nationalist planes in Spain; J. Rouffeur, a Dutch pilot; Marcel Florien and A. Boulengre, French pilots; Leeong, a Chinese pilot who resided for 12 years in California; and Martial Laroche, a French pilot sent back to Paris after he cracked up three planes.

Schmidt's squadron became operational in November 1937. It was initially equipped with Vultee V11B and Northrop 2E single-engine low-wing attack bombers. Later, the squadron received twin-engine Martin 139 bombers (export versions of the B-10).

The 14th Volunteer Bombardment Squadron conducted a series of raids against the Japanese north of Hankow. All squadron gunners — except for Allen — were Chinese. Schmidt's men were the focus of animosity from USAAC Reserve instructors in China, from Claire Chennault, from Soviet pilots also stationed at Hankow and from Chinese Air Force officers who referred to the 14th's pilots as "foreign devils."

Jim Allison reported that the 14th Volunteer Bombardment Squadron made a raid from Hankow on Taihoku, Formosa, on 14 February 1938, lasting in mission time from 0700 to 1400 hours, with six Martin 139s piloted by Schmidt, Allison, Gibbon, Rouffeur, Voelpel and Weigel. Later that month and in early March, raids were made against Japanese positions along the Yellow River.

Dissatisfied with their pay, 14th Squadron members met with Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek on 8 March 1938. A few days later, Vincent Schmidt was replaced by Squadron Commander Hsu Huansheng. The Americans were ordered to turn their planes over to the Chinese at Chengtu, 600 miles west of Hankow. On 22 March 1938, the foreign pilots in the 14th Volunteer Bombardment Squadron were disbanded. Of the eight Vultees turned over to the Chinese, six were shot down in a week's time. —J.S.A.

KILLERS IN RETIREMENT

"No Heroes, No Villains, Just Mates"

by Jim Morris

THE doorway was almost hidden behind an obelisk listing the wars in which Australians had fought, and their dates. The last was Vietnam, 1962-1973, a long bloody war. I went in, followed a short hallway to another door, and found myself looking across a pool table at a darkened, noisy bar, full of middle-aged men in military haircuts.

Australian beer is the best in the world, and the national pastime seems to be knocking back fifteen or twenty of them every evening. In profile, each man had a healthy gut, and what might be charitably described as a "ruddy" complexion.

At the bar, I spotted the man I thought was Jack. He had a little bit of a gut, somewhat out of balance on his hipless frame, and his shoulders were set at a parade-ground angle. He looked sort of like Phil Harris, the bandleader, but his face was not ruddy; it appeared to be made of football leather. Jack Morrison: former senior sergeant major of the Australian army, most highly decorated Aussie in Korea, second award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal in Vietnam — where I had met him in the 8th Field Hospital — and perhaps the bravest, and without doubt the most foul-mouthed, man I have ever met.

Still, it was dark in the bar; I had not seen him in 15 years and had never seen him out of uniform. Just to be on the safe side I eased up to the bar. It took me a minute to get the barmaid's attention and ask, "Is that Jack Morrison?" by which time he had disappeared into the men's room.

But, at the sound of an American accent, two middle-aged men whirled and approached me. With stunning speed my hand was shaken twice and a beer was slapped in it. They introduced themselves as members of Jack's company from Korea, and asked me if I had known a guy named Ray Stevens; I had not.

Jack had been their company sergeant major in Korea and promoted both of them to sergeant. The one on the left was of Italian descent and looked sort of like a middle-aged Vic Damone. There was something oddly familiar about the other, but I couldn't place it. I didn't catch either of their names. They were both getting on a bit, and a little drunk, but there was something about their eyes. These were not shopkeepers or farmers. These were killers in genteel retirement.

"How is Jack?" I asked.

The oddly familiar one on the right did most of the talking. He wore his wavy gray hair a little long and had a handsome, intelligent face. The backs of his eyes were diamond points.

"Not so good, Jack isn't. The government's fuckin' 'im about on his disability pension, and his feet drain from the effects of Agent Orange. Has to wear special shoes." He launched on a long explanation of Jack's war with the Australian bureaucracy, which I couldn't follow very well.

Then, with no transition I can recall, he was in the middle of a war story from Korea.

"Y'know we 'ad these Korean blokes attached, not worth the powder to blow 'em to 'ell." He leaned on the bar and took a sip from his schooner. "And you know, if you 'ave to clean a grenyde, it's necessary to do it outdoors. Anywye, this Korean sahgent's cleanin' a grenyde in the bunker and some'ow 'e dislodges the pin and kills two of our blokes."

"And himself I suppose."

"Naow, 'e got out, and starts 'eadin' toward the CP bunkah, so I calls Jack. 'Jack,' I says. 'There's a Korean sahgent comin' your wye. Be there in a minute.'

" 'Yeh!' says Jack. 'Wot about it?'

" 'Kill 'im,' says I.

" 'Orroyt!' sayd Jack."

"Which," I replied, "knowing Jack, he did."

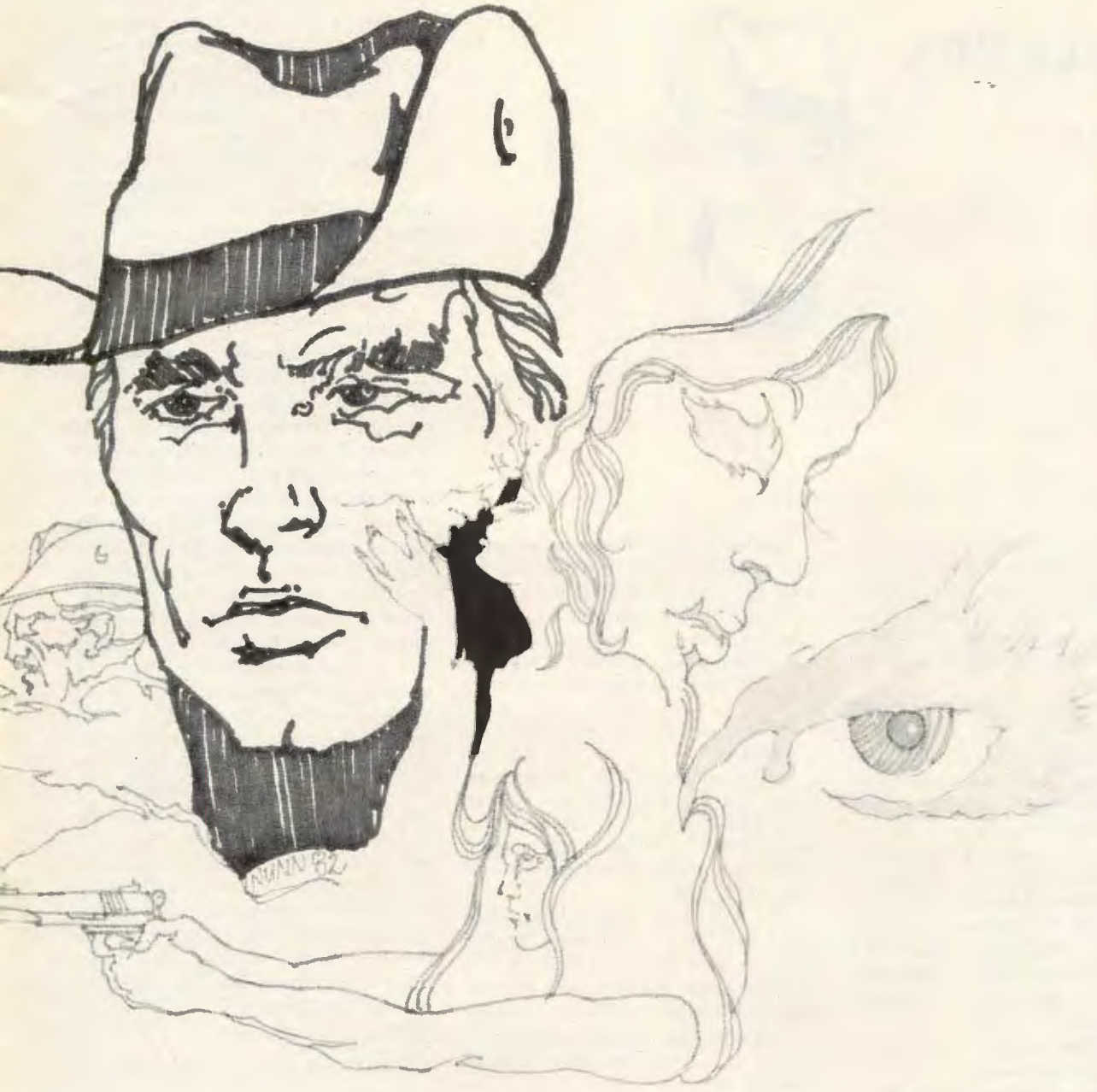
"Royt! So about foive minutes later I'm in the CP and Jack says, 'Wot was that all about?'

"So I tells 'im.

" 'Oo!' 'e says, ' 'e shouldn't a done that'."

We laughed.

Then I felt a hand descend on my shoulder. It was Jack's. "These cunts



treatin' you orroyt?" he asked.

I nodded.

"Orroyt!" he said. "Listen, I'm voice president 'ere, and we're 'avin' a meetin'. Don't know how long it'll tyke. These girls'll tyke care of you."

"Just a minute," I said. "I have something to show you." I unzipped my overnight bag and got out a copy of my book, *War Story,* in which Jack is a character. "Came 12,000 miles to give you this."

"Royt," he said. "Give 'er a look after the meetin'." He gave his watch a quick glance, winked, and disappeared. So did the guy who looked like Vic Damone, so I was left standing at the bar with the suave, gray-haired Aussie.

"Y'know we all love Jack 'ere," he said. "But a pure warrior loike 'e is, 'e cahn't deal with a bureaucracy. We troy to protect 'im, but 'e does things 'is own wye." He described how Jack had failed to touch second base on some application for his pension. As I understood it he would come out better if he claimed a non-combat disability, and he wouldn't do it.

"Wot are you doin' 'ere?" my host asked.

"On my way to Thailand," I replied.

"Ah, Thoiland," he said. "Ever been to Singapore?"

I shook my head, no. "Always wanted to."

"You know who _____is?" He named a certain Asian head of state, sufficiently prominent to rate a couple of mentions a year in *Time.*

"Yeah, I know who he is." I wondered what mental connection he had made between my mention of Thailand and Asian politicians in Singapore.

"One toime my sahgent had 'is pistol cocked this far from 'is ear, and was about to pull the trigger." He smiled at my puzzled expression and signalled for another beer.

"My shout," I said, reaching for my pocket.

"Your money's no good 'ere," he said gruffly. "Jack said you wasn't to pye for a thing."

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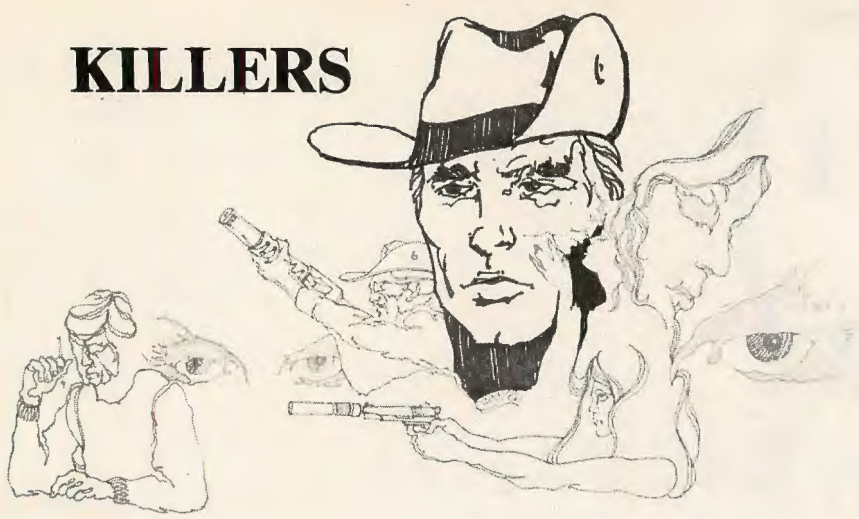

I shrugged and nodded thanks.

"Left seventy-foive enemy dead on that hill in Korea, Jack did. Reckon 'e'd a got the VC if he'd been a Pom." It was fairly obvious that everyone here had the same case of hero worship for Jack that I did.

My host's eyes switched back to his own story. "Y'ever 'ear of ====."

I nodded. Everybody in revolutionary warfare has heard of him, the man who fought a communist insurgency in Asia for ten years and won.

"I was a restless young bloke after Korea; couldn't find a job I liked in Australia. Answered an ad in the paper. The man said, 'Well, you've got the qualifications. Top NCO in Korea. I'll offer you a commission as lieutenant, special pay, and a paid-for vacation after every job.' "

"What was the job?"

"I was 'is bloody assassin."

Ian Fleming, that was who he reminded me of. A little shorter and heavier, but he had the same sharp-featured intelligence and wiry hair.

"I have nothing against orientals," he said, "but I hate communists. This man had been spouting the communist line and causing trouble. He was a very smart young politician, law graduate, but, we thought, a communist.

"My boss said to me, 'Ballentine, we may have to close the file on Mr._____.' You see, 'e always called me Ballentine, never Mr. Ballentine, never Harry. He was very British.

"The politician had about twenty-foive bodyguards there in the hotel where 'e was stayin', but they weren't difficult to get past. We went into the 'otel room and I 'ad my sahgeant put 'is pistol to the man's ear. But, you see, I'd always rather buy a man than kill 'im. It's simpler in the long run. You Americans never learnt that in Vietnam."

I smiled wryly. "Of course, we could have bought them all ten times over for what we spent trying to kill them."

"Well," Harry went on. "I 'ad my sahgeant put 'is pistol to _____'s ear. 'Are you a communist?' I asked.

" 'No,' he said. 'I am not a communist.'

" 'Then why do you spout the communist line?'

" 'The communists are very popular. Don't kill me now. Perhaps we can make a deal.' Ah, 'e was a cool one. If I 'ad so much as blinked, my sahgeant would 'ave pulled the trigger. 'Come with me,' I said.

"We walked out past 'is bodyguards and I took 'im to 'eadquarters through the back way. He was in with my boss for three hours. When 'e came out they were both smiling. 'Ballentine,' said my boss, 'I'd like you to meet the next president of _____.' And we shook 'ands all round."

"He's still in power," I said.

"Yes, and the British are still secretly in control. As I said, it's easier to buy them.

" 'Will I see you again, Mr. Ballentine?' The politician asked. At that my boss looked startled. 'If you see Mr. Ballentine again,' 'e said, 'he will be the last person you ever see!' "

"Have you ever seen him again?" I asked.

"Oh no," Harry replied. "I would never go to 'is country. 'E might think I was still active and take preventive measures. "That sergeant of mine was a rather interesting specimen," he went on. "When I took the job I had a 36-man platoon, all 'and-picked men, but no sergeant. My boss suggested I interview this chap at the jail awaiting execution. He was a Choinese tong killer. I went down there. 'Look,' I said, 'I can 'ave you out of 'ere this afternoon. You come to work for me. I'll make you a sergeant. You get special pay, and paid-for leave after each job. And after two years, a pardon.' He thought about it for a long time. 'Well,' he said, 'it's better than doyin',' " He laughed. "Better than doyin'." he repeated.

He started to signal for another beer. "Listen," I said. "I haven't eaten since noon, and I'm not used to this stuff. If I don't get something in my stomach soon you're going to have a sloppy drunk on your hands."

"Fish and chips orroyt or do you want a hamburger?"

I smiled. "Fish and chips is fine."

It was fully dark and the air crisp as we walked through the streets of that run-down commercial area of Melbourne. It was July, early winter in Australia. I had a bit of a buzz on, and wondered why he was telling me all this. One of the reasons I had come to Melbourne was to see if Jack would be interested in an interview on his wartime experiences; and now here was this other story. It was good, and had an authentic ring to it, but on the other hand you run into a lot of bullshit artists. Anyway, I enjoyed the conversation.

We went down a block and over two, crossing the railroad tracks, and went into what is called a "take-away" in Australia — a carry-out place. Harry had fish and chips and I had a chiko roll, which resembles an oversize eggroll — and holds roughly the same position in Australian society that a taco does in ours. We squeezed into a back booth at the take-away and I smiled at the thought of Ian Fleming and James Bond's gourmet meals. "You mind if I use some of this stuff?" I asked, meaning his experiences.

"My Sergeant Was A Choinese Tong Killer"

He looked at me closely, to see if I was the kind of journalist who would betray a confidence. "Don't use _____'s real name," he said. "That would be very embarrassing."

"Don't worry, I won't." I had no desire to hurt an ally who ran what appeared to be a relatively prosperous and happy country. "What about your name?"

He pondered for a moment. "Call me ... Wong!" he grinned and uttered a short, barking laugh. (I didn't do that, but his name is not exactly Ballentine either.)

"If you write this," he said around a mouthful of chips, "there's a story you should use.

"There was a Choinese lady in the our unit who operated alone, a lovely thing she was; always carried a .32 in 'er bra. The communists had killed her 'usband and she had joined our unit for revenge. Ah, Gawd! She was beautiful and I wanted her; tried everything I knew to get her and nothing worked.

"One evening, shortly after I had received a new assignment, she appeared at my bungalow. 'The man you have just been assigned to kill is the man who murdered my husband. I want him.'

" 'I couldn't do that,' I replied. 'This is a professional job, not a vendetta.'

" 'You will get two weeks' leave after the job,' she said. 'I will spend those two weeks with you, and I guarantee you will remember them always as the best two weeks of your life!' "

I had been skeptical before, and that sounded way too perfect. But when he smiled at the memory — a slow, disingenuous, reminiscent smirk — it was not the smile of a man running a con.

"My platoon had him surrounded in an alley; he came out the door. We caught him full in the searchlight. I promised Florence the first three shots, and they were two more than she needed."

"How was your vacation?"

"Best one I ever 'ad," he replied. "But when I got back the boss called me in. 'When two of my best agents go to the same place at the same time, I become curious,' he said. 'You're good, but she's better than you. I don't want her effectiveness impaired in any way.' So I told him what had happened."

"Was he pissed?"

"No. 'E didn't care as long as it wasn't permanent. He didn't want her married."

"Did you take her out after that?"

"No." There was a touch of wistfulness in his reply. I believed him then.

"You must have had some strange romantic encounters in a position like that."

"I had a maid I was very fond of. Been sleepin' with 'er for two years. She asked for toime off to visit 'er sick mother. I don't know what she was thinkin' of, because I'd checked 'er out thoroughly, and knew 'er mother was dead.

"So I let her go and stayed up that noight. When the first knock came I put a six-round burst from a Sten through the door. They left royt awye and there were three blood trails into the bush outside my door. They never bothered me at home after that.

"I worried a bit about what to do to her. She set me up, but I'm sure she was under a death threat at the toime. I 'ad to do something, though, or appear soft. So I fixed her up with a couple of years' easy detention. Not too bad.

"One other toime there was a Malay actress I wanted badly. Tried everything. Sent 'er flowers; sent 'er candy. Nothing. Then I got a message to meet her in a certain restaurant. Should 'ave known then, but I went.

"An 'alf-hour after she was supposed to arroive, the hair on the back of me neck stood up, which has saved me more than once. Two Choinese men who looked familiar came in the restaurant, but I already 'ad my pistol under the table. When the first one got 'is out, I hit 'im first. But the second one grabbed 'im, and held 'im in front, and started foirin'. I 'ad to 'it 'im in the 'ead, and by that toime I 'ad a wound in me gut. Got 'im though."

"The Hair On The Back Of Me Neck Stood Up"

I took a bite out of the chiko roll.

Much refreshed from having lined our stomachs with grease, we once again stepped into the nippy air between the take-away and the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL).

When we entered its dark, boozy interior, I spotted Jack over by the bar with my AWOL bag, bent over my book in the dim light. It was open to the part, about two-thirds of the way through, where he makes his appearance.

He sat next to a dark-haired lady of almost his age, who looked about how one might expect Raquel Welch to look in fifteen years, if her luck holds. Jack looked up like a kid caught with his hands in the cookie jar and quickly shoved the book back into the AWOL bag. Harry introduced me to Jack's wife, Pat, and while that was happening Jack disappeared again.

My ears are all blown out from a combination of artillery, aircraft engines and heavy-metal rock 'n' roll, so I could scarcely understand what was said, but somehow she got the idea from Harry that either I hadn't eaten, or hadn't eaten enough. She reached into her purse and pulled out a slice of baklava wrapped in waxed paper, and offered it to me with a touchingly tender smile, such as I have never seen on Raquel Welch.

There was a schooner of Victoria Bitter in my left hand, and a slice of sweet Greek pastry in my right. I was at a loss as to how to proceed.

Harry was in my ear with another story. " ...shot this bloke dead in the street, and I 'ad nothing to prove who 'e was, so, much to my surproise, I was arrested. 'This toime, Mr. Ballentine, you've gone too far,' says the inspector.

" 'Don't let it come to trial, man,' I told him. 'You don't know who you're dealin' with.'

" 'I am a professional police officer,' 'e says. 'I do moy job accordin' to the law.'

" 'Don't ruin yourself, man,' I told him. 'This isn't London. We aren't foightin' criminals; we're foightin bloody communist insurgents, and none of the rules apply'."

"So what happened?" I asked. I made short work of the baklava and licked my fingers.

"They flew a magistrate out from England for the troial. I was acquitted, and the inspector was sent 'ome, shakin' 'is 'ead. 'I cahn't understand it,' 'e said. 'I've been a dedicated policeman for thirty years.'

" 'Told you this was war, man,' I told him. 'You can't interfere with the secret police.' "

I heard a loud electronic click and Jack's voice boomed over the PA system, rumbling like gravel in a steel chute. "Me mate Jimmy Morris ... come all the wye from America to see me ... moy shout ... step to the bar." A moment later he was back at the bar, smiling, charged with energy.

Soon I met a whole procession of Aussies — the old and grizzled, and the young, T-shirted and bearded. They were all slightly drunk and they all had the look of combat men, with enlarged facial pores, and smiles that knew too much. But there was a genuine openness there. I liked all of them and they accepted me as one of their own. I understood them much better than I understand American civilians. Combat is one of those experiences which unites all who have had it. I would be far more at home at a gathering of ex-VC than I would be at a meeting of the junior chamber of commerce in my own home town.

Suddenly the PA clicked on again and a voice said, "Noine o'clock." Everyone in the room stood up and all the lights went out except for one small spot which illuminated something hung on the left wall, which I couldn't make out. I had forgotten. This was the nine o'clock silence, a nightly memoriam to Australian servicemen killed in war. I had been told about it by an Aussie lady: "Sort of pathetic, really, all these drunken old sods, living in the past." But I did not find it so. Normally my reactions to ceremonies of this sort range from indif-

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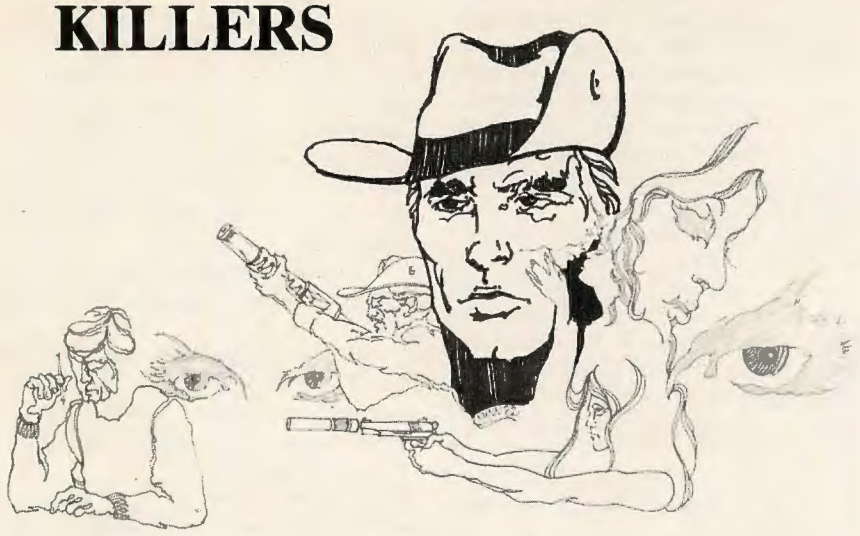

ference to cynicism, but this night I was touched by the obvious sincerity of these people's feelings. The voice on the PA recited:

"In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark the place; and in the sky
The larks still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe.
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep though poppies grow
In Flanders fields."

(By Col. John McRae, who died in France through illness contracted during WWI. His poem is published by courtesy of the proprietors of *Punch*, owners of the copyright.)

And in response everyone there but I, who did not know the ceremony, responded in chorus:

"We shall not forget them.
We shall not forget them.
We shall not forget them."

Then the lights came back up, the noise level rose and I buried my nose in the foam.

"Ah, 'tis a beautiful thing!" Jack said.

Shortly after that I found myself in a car with Harry, Pat and Jack. Harry was *driving*.

It seemed a fairly short trip to Jack's house and I suppose there was conversation, although I don't remember any of it, except for one comment of Harry's about me. " 'E doesn't miss much; I was watchin' 'is eyes at the club." It is true that I don't miss much, but I hadn't caught Harry watching my eyes, so I presume he misses less than I do.

Jack's house is over a hundred years old, and he proudly showed me through, showing off the workmanship on the old fireplaces. Then he placed my book on the shelf with his other books on war. Over the fireplace was a copy of a painting of a younger Sgt. Major Jack Morrison, the hero of Korea. He was thinner in it, and seemed more grim than the man I knew.

"It's a copy of one in the army museum in Canberra," Harry said. "The government paidly 10,000 for it." Jack, standing there, swelled visibly with pride. He unabashedly gloried in being a legend in his own time, although I have never heard him brag, and was unable to extract the story from him I thought I had come for.

After that Jack took me outside to show me two Peking ducks he had penned up in the back yard. We shared a whiz on the grass and went inside for another beer.

I Was Beginning To Understand Why He Told Me These Stories

Pat and Harry had cracked two bottles of Victoria Bitter and we went into the living room where the record player was. For my edification, Jack played a record of the English tenor, Peter Dawson, singing an album of military songs, notably the "Ballad of Private Roger Young" and "The Sergeant Major on Parade." I enjoyed Jack's enthusiasm as he raised his glass, pumped his right arm in time to the music and sang along. Pat gazed at Jack in what looked to me like plain flat-out adoration. Harry looked at them both fondly.

"Pat's not Australian," he said. "She's cockney. Jack met her in London. I love 'er, you know. But don't tell Jack. 'E'd kill me. I gave him me own pistol; seventeen personal kills on it, and e'd do the eighteenth, and it'd be me."

During a break between songs, Pat held Jack's arm and asked, "Are y'doin' orroyt, beloved?"

He gazed at her with the most tender, loving look I have ever seen a man give a woman, smiled wryly and said, "Oi'm doin' foine, y'poisonous Pommy bahstid."

After the military songs, Pat put on a Dean Martin album and she and Jack danced, quite well, and Harry told me another story.

"There was a man, a very dangerous man, and no one had been able to remove him. I was asked if I could do the job. I said yes."

"How?" I asked. We stood by the fireplace, with our glasses of Victoria Bitter. I was not incapacitated, but I had drunk more than I wanted. My belly was tight. Harry was still sipping along at about the same rate he had all evening.

"I got to him through his brother. First I arranged for his business to make about four hundred pounds a month more than it had, for four months. Then I cut him off. By then he'd bought a new house and a new car; gained a whole new level of expectations. After the second month he was desperate. That's when I approached him. I convinced him that I didn't want his brother's life. I told him that his brother would be in jail for two years and that, after that, I'd set them up with a new identity in a new location. In the meantime I'd get him out of debt, and see he 'ad some left over."

"Was that what you wanted?"

"No. I killed his brother. When my informant found out what he'd done, he committed suicide. What the 'ell! I slept that noight. It's a rough game."

This time I was watching Harry's eyes. Somewhere back down in there he flinched. He may have slept well the night it happened, but I'll wager he's lost some sleep over the years since. I was beginning to understand his reason for telling me these stories.

The dance ended and Jack and Pat joined us. Jack asked Pat to get an album of clips and pictures of his military career. There were stories about his DCM and Bar, about his retirement, with pictures of him in garrison cap and Sam Browne belt. He looked ill at ease in them. Jack was a field soldier, pure and simple.

Among the pictures was one of him when he first joined the service in World War II, as merry a lad as you'd ever

want to see, with guileless eyes and a reckless grin, his slouch hat worn at the same non-regulation, if not impossible, angle he'd worn it at in the hospital.

"Just a young trooper," he said and laughed. What I saw was a classic example of the kind of kid who drives his sergeant to drink or insanity.

He also proudly showed me a picture of his daughter, married to a younger, retired regimental sergeant major, now doing well as a painting contractor.

"She made a foine army woife, with her upbringin'," he said.

Jack and Pat danced the next dance, and I talked to Harry again. This time we leaned against a wall on the opposite side of the room. He leaned forward, speaking softly and earnestly. This time there was no pretense. Here was a man baring his soul.

"We attacked a terrorist camp, and took a woman prisoner. She must have been high up in the party. She wore the red tabs of a commissar. I'd already told my men we took no prisoners, but I'd never killed a woman. 'She must die quickly. We must leave!' my sergeant said.

"Oh god, I was sweatin'," Harry went on. "She was magnificent. 'What's the matter, Mister Ballentine?' she asked. 'You're sweatin'.

" 'Not for you,' I said. 'It's a malaria recurrence.' I gave my pistol to my sergeant, but he just shook his head. I had got this man out of prison. None of them would do it. None of them would do it, and if I didn't I'd never be able to control that unit again.

" 'You're sweatin', Mr. Ballentine,' she said again.

" 'Not for you,' I said."

"Did you kill her?"

"Hell, I blew 'er fuckin' 'ead off," he replied.

Jack and Pat glided by to the waning notes of "Volare."

"My platoon all gathered 'round and smiled. 'You are our *tuän*,' my sergeant said. 'You are our *tuan*.' "

I'm not a priest. I'm not even an officer anymore. I had never let my Montagnards kill prisoners. But I'd quit interrogating them because I was starting to like it. That was not something I had wanted to know about myself. And we've all seen good men die because we weren't exactly in top form that particular day. I had forgiven myself for that. I hoped my look told Harry that I liked him, that it was okay with me if he forgave himself. It's hard to do though. The only way you can accept that you're not a villain is to admit you're not a hero either.

The record ended. We had another beer. Harry went home and after a while we all went to bed.

Pat had already gone to work when I got up the following morning. Jack was in the kitchen frying both of us a steak for breakfast.

There was something that had been bothering me. I try to be as honest as I can in my writing, and sometimes I worry that things I say about my friends might hit them the wrong way. "Let me read you what I wrote about you," I said to Jack.

"I read it, myte," he said, over the skillet.

"I hope you weren't offended when I called you a 'beat-up old duffer'."

He smiled a little wryly. "I wasn't offended, myte."

After breakfast we got in Jack's car. I still hadn't got used to the driver's side being on the right, and more than once I had been almost creamed by an oncoming car, stepping off the curb looking the wrong way.

"This part of Melbourne's all Greek," Jack said. "Melbourne's got the third largest Greek population of any city in the world."

"Hell, I Blew 'Er Fuckin' 'Ead Off"

Jack had suggested, with no dissent on my part, that he show me some of the Australian paintings in the National Museum, where he worked as a guard's officer. The streets changed into broad park-like boulevards as we neared the museum. There was just the suggestion of a nip, and no flowers bloomed, but the palm trees grew along the boulevard; it was a British city in the tropics.

"I helped build this street when I was a young fella," Jack said.

The museum was a beautiful modern structure, with a banner outside advertising a Pompeii exhibit I had seen in Dallas a year or so previously.

Inside, I checked my AWOL bag and Jack explained what he was doing to the guard on duty. "The guards are all retired warrant officers," Jack explained on the escalator. A warrant officer in the Australian army is what we would call a senior NCO in ours. I grinned inside, thinking of those old sergeants major, working in that museum after decades of army life. I fancied I could detect a mellowing effect.

Jack had a pretty clear idea of what he wanted to show me, and I had to drag my feet to pause by some brilliantly designed glass sculptures, flashing translucent primary colors. He blasted right through the modern and impressionist section, and barged back to the 17th- and 18th-century stuff, to show me some dark and brooding English landscapes. His only judgment was, "There's not an 'ell of a lot of difference between a Turner and a Constable."

When we had seen what he wanted to show me, I insisted on going back to the moderns and to the impressionists, which are my favorites. Jack stood off to the side and pretended not to know me while I examined some of them closely. But the comments he did make, particularly about the porcelain and the Australian painting, showed he hadn't been sleep-walking during his time in the museum.

"Did you have any interest in this stuff before you came to work here?" I asked.

"No," he replied.

We left the museum and turned left toward the business district. Jack told me that the park across the street was the home of ducks which sometimes decide to cross with their ducklings, and that the cops would leap out and stop traffic for them.

We walked across the bridge over the River Yarra, which reminded me somewhat of pictures I've seen of the Seine in Paris. It's not very much like that, but it is more like that than either the North Canadian where it runs through Oklahoma City, or the Mekong in Phnom Penh, the two rivers in cities that I know.

A block past the railway station, Jack turned into a pub. Inwardly I cringed. It was only 10:30 in the morning and I am not much of a drinker. I had probably drunk more beer in the past two weeks in Australia than in the preceding decade. But it was an hour and a half until my ride left for Wagga-Wagga, and I was enjoying Jack's company.

"Nothing I loike better'n a pot o' beer," Jack said as we stepped up to the bar, all dark wood and tasteful appointments.

"See that paintin'?" Jack pointed out a huge floor-to-ceiling nude in an elaborate gold frame, extremely well done, of a young girl of surpassing innocence.

"That's Chloe," he said. "That's a very famous paintin'. The whole city of Melbourne's proud of 'er. During the war some of your blokes, Marines they were, tried to steal her. Six of 'em, drunk, some'ow got 'er out of the frame; 'ad 'er rolled up and ready to go out the door. They gave 'er back without a foight when it was explyned 'ow important she was."

A voice broke in over Jack's shoulder. "Cracky Jack Morrison, from Korea, by god." The speaker was in bad shape. It was 10:30 in the morning and he was shitfaced. He was clean-shaven and well-

Continued on page 66

MERCENARY MATERIEL

Selecting Your Kit

Text & Photos by Bill Boggs

THE mercenary: Whether accepted as a soldier or rejected as an entrepreneur of death really doesn't matter. Throughout history, the mercenary has always played a role in the global drama of good and evil. Those who play this role and adopt its lifestyle do so of their own choice. Those who play, play to win. The intent of the following information is to provide some of my insights concerning equipment that can increase the options and survival odds in the mercenary's favor.

I firmly believe that the U.S. military is the finest in the world. However, I am aware of the military's inability to react rapidly to change. Although I cannot endorse everything that is issued to our fighting forces, the military-issue equipment is, in some cases, the superior choice. But the mercenary, operating in a temperate to tropical environment, may find options that warrant consideration available from expedition and mountaineering suppliers. The focus of this article is to cover some of those options. Climatic extremes require special considerations and techniques. While the majority of the equipment options presented here can be used to meet these extremes, my primary focus will be on temperate to tropical conditions.

If one sets aside weapons and foot gear, the pack (bag and frame) is the most important element in the long-range patrol's personal equipment inventory. Why? It's home. To a recon unit operating for weeks on end in the bush, the pack takes on a special significance.

The ALICE pack (All-purpose Lightweight Infantry Combat Equipment) is advertised for sale by mail order in various publications with costs ranging from $50 to $115. From personal experience I can say the ALICE pack is better than its WWII or Korean War counterparts, but it is by no means suitable for long-range operations or for carrying much weight. Its suggested load limit is 50 pounds, but to carry this much in an ALICE pack for a long trek becomes physical torture. The pack volume is small. Its design is suited for short-term light loads. For a long range reconnaissance patrol, the cost exceeds the product you get. Special-warfare units rarely use the ALICE pack and SEAL-team members will often choose commercial packs for long-range operations.

Packs come in two basic designs: internal and external frames. The ALICE pack is an external-frame unit. This means that the pack bag attaches to an exposed frame. The frames of internal-pack designs are sewn into the body of the bag. (The rucksack has no frame at all and is used for short hikes or recreation.) The internal frame is favored by mountain climbers, as it fits close to the body contours and has no sharp edges or exposed frame parts to catch on rock, which could throw the climber off balance. The external frame is favored by backpackers and for extended expeditions because of its carrying ability and comfort. If loaded properly, it will carry heavy loads with less physical exertion than an internal-frame unit. Also, in hot climates the space between the bag and the back allows air to circulate, so it is cooler and more comfortable to use. A padded hip belt distributes the weight, and increases the functional capabilities significantly.

Once you have selected the basic design, the next question is size. Most manufacturers build frames to suit different body builds. A good mountaineering store can help you, but if you're in a location where this service is unavailable, any of the large mail order houses such as Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS) or Kelty® can offer competent assistance. Given your height and weight, a dealer can fit you with the right frame the first time. Since this equipment will be used well beyond the scope of the backpacker's, construction and quality of materials must be a prime consideration.

Most current pack designs have aluminum frames. My personal pref-

ABOVE: Tropical tent by Sierra West.
LEFT: The Fitzroy from Trailwise is excellent example of freestanding A-frame tent. Note vent hole in rear.

ABOVE: Pick the right container for the right job. Plastic bottle is for water; aluminum and steel cans are designed for fuels.
BELOW: Water bottles: Carry only what you have to. A shape for every need.

ABOVE: Two examples of boot design. Left: Lightweight roughout boot. This design is poor choice for anything but recreational hiking. Right: Boot made of chrome-tanned leather. Upper part of boot is one solid piece of leather.
BELOW: Canvas hiking shoes.

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erence goes to the welded "H"-shaped frames. Avoid packs with coupling devices and screw joints to hold their frames together. They are weak and tend to fail under severe stress. The best H-frame designs are exemplified by the Kelty® pack, which is guaranteed for life against failure. Kelty® frames have welded joints.

To test a frame's strength, place one leg of the frame on the floor and press down firmly. A good H-frame with welded joints will stand the test with no flex. (The Coleman® Peak 1 series, on the other hand, has a frame that is not made of aluminum and is made to flex.)

Shoulder straps should be wide and firmly padded, with secure buckles to prevent the adjusting straps from slipping under stress. A quality pack will have close, tight stitching. The stitching will not run off the end fabric but terminate in double rows of reinforcement. All stress points will have reinforced stitching. The bag fabric will be a heavy grade of nylon with a tight weave. Back bands holding the pack frame away from the body should be made of nylon mesh to help air circulate. Adjustment mechanisms for the back bands may be turn buckles or knotted nylon line; either is acceptable. Make sure the gromets (round metal eyelets) attaching the bag to the frame are secure to the fabric, since they carry the weight of the bag and its contents.

Most pack bags are constructed of heavy nylon fabric which is usually water repellent. However, a heavy rain will soak through the bag. The solution is a water-proof bag cover. Kelty® makes an excellent cover for its bags that works on many other brands as well.

A hip belt is an absolute necessity if you intend to carry heavy weights for an extended period of time. The idea is to put the weight on the hips rather than the shoulders. Since the legs are stronger, they tend to carry the weight more effectively. Padded hip belts are more comfortable, obviously, than the wide nylon-webbing style. Before you buy your pack, have the salesperson stuff it with the weights they use for simulation purposes. You'll be surprised at the hip belt's effectiveness. The belt's release buckle should be designed to free the pack instantly. For military operations this is an absolute necessity. The Kelty® hip belt is a prime example of good design.

My advice concerning packs is: Whatever you buy, make certain it fits your body build. Cost is a fairly accurate guide to quality — you get what you pay for. I've used the Kelty® Tioga for many years. All Kelty® products are of exceptional quality, extremely durable — and they have never failed me. I've used the Tioga in all climates and circumstances from days to months at a time. It has even been dropped from helicopters into snow banks without damage. In the bush with no support on line for weeks on end, the $100-plus cost will seem insignificant. Over several years of use, the Kelty® is economical.

Various members of SEAL teams have had favorable results with the Coleman® Peak 1 backpack unit during long-term operations. The Coleman® is unique, in that its frame is made of a high-impact plastic compound. Durable and silent (no metal-to-metal contact), the Coleman® Peak 1 has proven a worthwhile piece of equipment.

Whatever You Buy — Make Sure It Fits

Commercial backpacking equipment is usually made of bright material to aid in a search-and-rescue situation. This is totally unacceptable for military use, but most manufacturers offer an olive-green pack bag. You will find that color is a critical issue when selecting equipment from suppliers in the private sector.

Loading a pack is a science in itself. Pack bags come in two basic designs — divided and undivided. Purchase the bag divided into two sections horizontally. This makes loading the bag and retrieving equipment much easier. There are a few basic rules that, if followed, will make living out of a nylon bag a little less insane.

A. The majority of the weight should be kept high and centered close to the back. Putting heavy objects toward the outside in the lower bag compartment places undue and excessive stress on the shoulders.
B. Use the outside pockets for items needed often or in a hurry: compass, flashlight, first-aid kit, water-purification tablets, bug juice, sunscreen, weapon-cleaning tools and matches. Make a habit of using the same pockets for the same objects.
C. Pack the bag by placing the last items to be used each day in first. Don't place your rain gear or the noon meal in the bottom of the bag.
D. Divide each day's food supply into three meals, each meal in a separate plastic bag, and put all three meals into a single, large, one-day's-supply bag. Individual bags should be clearly marked for specific meals and days of use.
E. Cooking pots should be placed in a denim or cloth bag with utensils and cleaning equipment.
F. Pack rain gear, extra clothing, and gloves on top within the upper compartment, especially if you're in an area where weather may become a factor that affects your fighting ability.
G. Cooking pots, one day's food and lighter-weight stoves should go in the bottom compartment. Sleeping bag should be placed in the open area below the pack bag.
H. Keep your maps in the front map pocket, sealed in a plastic map case. Use clear shelf paper for an inexpensive, waterproof map covering. Two dollars' worth of shelf paper covers three to four quads.
I. Keep all lids and caps sealed tightly — no leaks. Use only top-quality plastic bottles for water and either top-quality metal containers for fuel or a synthetic container designed for fuel. Just because it doesn't leak when set upright doesn't mean it won't leak if dropped or packed upside-down.
J. Use nylon webbing in ½-inch belts to secure sleeping bags and Ensolite® pads to the pack frame. Ropes are tedious to knot and untie unless you practice knot-tying for sport.
K. Use a rain cover — while pack bags are water-repellent, they are not waterproof. Down sleeping bags are neither. I use a plastic bag inside my sleeping-bag stuff sack to ensure a dry bag at nightfall.

The final thing a special-operations team considers in the planning phase of the operation is sleep — and justifiably so. Creature comfort is not a prime concern — but the quality of the sleep must be sound. Sleep deprivation increases disintegration of judgment.

The current military-issue sleep-

ABOVE: Sleeping pads. Top: self-inflating Therma Rest; left: nylon- and cotton-covered polyurethane pad; right: Uniroyal Regalite.
RIGHT: Two most effective sleeping bag shapes. Blue bag is modified mummy. Red bag is mummy design.

ing bags are fine for mechanized units, but poor for long-range infantry patrols. They are bulky and weigh too much. The best choice is a quality commercial sleeping bag. The first questions to be answered concern bag design and filling material.

There are four basic shapes: mummy, semi-mummy, barrel and rectangular.

To simplify a rather complex set of thermal equations concerning heat retention, let's clarify the issue of sleeping-bag shape in this manner: The mummy is the warmest, lightest and most efficient sleeping-bag design, but it is confining. The semi-mummy offers more room in the shoulder and hip areas but is slightly less efficient in retaining body heat. The barrel shape is roomier yet, with additional space in the foot of the bag. The rectangular is the least efficient in retaining heat, yet offers the most room; its primary drawbacks are weight and size. Quality bags are seldom made in this shape. The modified mummy and the barrel are the best bags for a compromise of efficiency and weight.

In the backpacking industry, debate continues concerning the advantages of goose down over duck down or down over synthetic materials.

If I were forced to fight my battles at high altitude in the Rockies, I might choose a down bag. However, it is not a good choice for a tropical or semitropical environment. Down, although extremely efficient when dry, is useless when wet. Down bags are also less durable than synthetic ones. The new synthetic bags will retain insulating value when wet and will dry quickly. They also cost less. A good-quality sleeping bag of synthetic fill can be bought for around $100 to $115. Synthetic Polar Guard and Hollow Fill (often labeled Hollow Bored) are effective and, regardless of advertising claims, quite similar in performance. Some companies (such as EMS) give a temperature rating with each sleeping bag. This should be treated as a rough guide. The efficiency depends on the metabolism of the user as well

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as on the environment. Tents, shelters, sleeping-bag covers and additional clothing will change this factor.

Know the climatic conditions well in advance before departing on an operation. Preparation and planning increase survival odds. For a temperate-to-tropical environment, a three-season sleeping bag with a rating of +20F will be sufficient to meet all but the harshest year-round circumstances. A three-season bag can be used with a heavier outer bag, if you must operate in an extremely cold climate. This system gives you flexibility and cuts equipment costs. For a true tropical environment, use the lightest synthetic bag possible.

It is a good idea to use a bivouac cover to house the bag. This will increase the insulating value and protect the bag, but adds little weight. If the bag is not brown or green, a bivouac cover in a camouflage color will be a necessity. I purchased a bulk quantity of ripstop nylon in a cammie pattern and had a seamstress sew one up for me.

Once you select a sleeping bag, your next step is to choose a sleeping pad. Forget air mattresses. They leak, are time-consuming to repair, heavy and generally undependable. Choose a foam pad. The most common material is Ensolite®. Ensolite® (a trademark of the Uniroyal Corporation) is a closed-cell foam that resists absorbing water and provides adequate insulation down to low temperatures without becoming brittle or cracking. The Marine Corps uses Ensolite® Type 1, an olive-green pad designed for all-climate use. This particular formula is difficult to find in commercial outlets. Most all of the Ensolite® available commercially will be type ML.

The drawback to any Ensolite other than Type 1 is its color: off-white. You may have to have a light covering sewn on the pad to offset this. Make sure the fabric you choose is breathable. Otherwise, you may find the bottom of your sleeping bag wet with perspiration, since when the body moisture is trapped, it will not wick past the pad cover onto the foam surface. Nylon, although light, is not necessarily a good choice, since a nylon sleeping bag will continually slide from its nylon cover every time you turn over during the night. The best cover bet would be a good cotton or combination fabric, such as a 60-40 percent

Kelty® frame and padded hip belt with nylon-mesh back bands. Frame is excellent example of H-design. All joints are welded for strength.

Lowe pack rides close to body with no visible frame members.

Kelty® hip belt utilizes quick-release buckle — a necessity in tense situations.

ABOVE: The Optimus 8R, excellent white-gas stove. Optimus 111 series is identical but slightly larger. LEFT: Three heating systems: sterno stove, GI heat tabs and Coleman® Peak I stove.

ABOVE: Kelty® bag is not waterproof. In severe weather rain cover is required.

LEFT: Kelty® Tioga bag and frame. Bag is available in olive green.

blend of cotton and nylon. This gives you a breathable, yet tear-resistant cover.

Open-cell pads are comfortable but absorb water in wet weather. They are bulkier and require more thickness (due to their compressibility) to achieve the same insulating value as Ensolite®. My choice is an Ensolite® pad with a light 60-40 percent cover. A new twist has been added by some manufacturers — the bi-pad. It is simply a layer of 1¼-inch medium-firm polyurethane, an open-cell foam, secured to one-fourth inch of Ensolite® with a 65-35 percent fabric cover. This pad is available from suppliers such as L.L. Bean in Freeport, Maine, and EMS. It seems to be an excellent design.

A new development in padding material is Regalite®. Regalite® combines extremely light weight, thermal insulation, and resistance to abrasion. It is pliable at low temperatures and resists full compression. Users say it is excellent though expensive — $18 to $24 per pad, depending upon length. The color is a not-so-desirable bright blue.

Shelters — either carried with you or created on the trail — can be a critical factor. Mountaineering tents must endure heavy winds, snow and ice. They are especially well-made, and should be given first consideration. With modern technology, their interior space is now greater than at any time in the past. They are free-standing, which means that unless adverse weather conditions are encountered, no lines are required to anchor or support the tent.

It is difficult to find a tent in a suitable color. Unfortunately, it is not cost-effective for manufacturers to make equipment on special order, unless that order is for several hundred units. I believe that tents manufactured by the North Face Corporation come closest to the needs of a mercenary operation.

The North Face "A"-frame tents include the Tuolumme in taupe (deep olive-green) and blue and the Sierra in taupe and gold. The lower sections are taupe; the upper are the brighter color. Both are easily covered by the taupe rain fly.

The North Face VE 23 and VE 24 tents are geodesic designs. Both come with sand-colored rain flies which generally blend in with desert and semi-arid environments. A variation of this design is the Skeeter VE 23, which utilizes tight-weave, bug-proof nylon netting for the canopy.

The Trailwise Fitzroy is a free-standing A-frame of excellent quality and function. Its color is more suitable for arid areas. Both North Face and Trailwise tents are de-

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signed to weather storms well and spill wind effectively. They are roomy enough for two individuals and their gear.

The Early Winters Company markets rather uniquely designed tents. The Light Dimension Series dome and Earth Station tents can be ordered in what the firm calls Meadow Green. Don't be turned off by their futuristic appearance; they are excellent in form and function and are expedition-proven. All erect and come down quickly.

No tent worth owning is waterproof. Water vapor must pass through the fabric or you'll end up sleeping bathed in the water vapor generated by your body. A tent fly is the only appropriate means of keeping rain outside the tent. Flies are completely effective only if the seams are sealed with some form of seam sealant. The appropriate sealant is available from any backpacking supplier.

Let the buyer beware: There are a great number of poorly made, unreliable products for sale. The manufacturers listed on page 41 have quality equipment. I can personally vouch for North Face and Trailwise, and close associates recommend the Early Winters equipment. I have not been able to evaluate other options.

Shelter in a purely tropical environment is a much easier problem to solve. In warm weather I prefer a tarp shelter. EMS sells the parawing and other basic tarps for this purpose. They are available in green. Tarps are versatile and weigh less than tents. However, bugs can and will keep you from sleeping. The new tents made with nylon-netting sides are worthwhile for the tropics, although somewhat prone to damage if treated carelessly. The Eureka Mojave and the Indiana Camp Supply bug tents are examples of this type. A bivvy sack with a mosquito-netting hood is a good alternate. These small shelters have built-in rain covers and are very light. They set up and come down quickly. Eastern Mountain Sports carries this type of shelter in its catalog. It is made by Sierra West in one- or two-man versions.

The USMC squad-tent concept is a feasible idea if unit size and mission permit. The larger mountaineering tents can be set up rapidly. Tent parts can be distributed so each team member shares the weight. Several manufacturers of quality

ABOVE: North Face VE 23, a geodesic-design tent.

RIGHT: Gore-Tex® rain jacket in commonest shade of green marketed by most manufacturers.

equipment make tents suitable for this type of operation. The critical problem is finding a squad-size tent in earth-tone colors.

Individual or two-man tents are usually the choice for small recon-type operations where natural shelter is unavailable. The mission, terrain and the climate are the key variables. A two-man mountain tent with rain fly is the best compromise and will fit most operational needs.

When purchasing a tent, be attentive to the same qualities necessary in purchasing the pack bag: good tight seams, reinforced stress points and functional zippers. The ease with which tents erect and take down should also be considered. Note that the fewer pieces there are, the fewer there are to lose. Tent poles for A-frames should have shock cords between each section so that each pole is a single unit, not a bundle of aluminum stakes.

The previously stated variables of mission, terrain and climate also apply to footwear. Climate is the overriding factor. Five options will be given consideration:

1. U.S. military current-issue boots;
2. Vietnam boots;
3. Commercial hunting boots;
4. Commercial backpacking boots;
5. Specialty boots such as the canvas-and-rubber bush shoe.

The current-issue boots are inexpensive, sturdy, durable and easy to obtain. In a temperate environment these boots work, but in climatic extremes they fall short.

The Vietnam boots are one of the few things to come out of that war that have been accepted by the general population. These boots work very well for their intended purpose — carrying a soldier over wet tropical terrain. In any other environment they are a compromise. In a dry, rocky region when you are carrying heavy loads, they lack the side support provided by a full-leather boot. A commercial spin-off of this type of boot is the Danner Gore-Tex® hiking boot available fom EMS.

Many outdoorsmen swear by hunting-style boots such as the Herman's Survivor or Browning Waterproof. They are excellent footwear, but some individuals find them too heavy. Heavy boots, while potentially durable, are tiring to wear. The old saying, "Five on the feet equals 15 on the back," *is true. However,*

boots that weigh less than five pounds per pair are not up to rigorous hard use, according to a spokesman from one of the better manufacturers. So you must find a compromise. Clark Rhinos are heavy canvas sneakers imported from England. Others on the market have similar construction. They are ideal for desert hiking and for use in hot tropical climates. However, if given a choice, I would prefer the Vietnam boot for this type of exercise.

Heavy canvas shoes are more of a leisure/safari-type footgear. Sharp objects such as metal or bamboo stakes will go straight through the sole. My personal preference when the going is extremely rough is the low-cut back-packing boot. Backpacker-style boots are long-wearing and comfortable when broken in — and they provide the necessary foot and ankle support. Their sides are stiff enough to prevent stone bruises and yet comfortable when you carry heavy loads over long distances. The Special Forces mountain boot made by Chippewa has gained support as a viable alternate to this style of boot, due to its availability on the surplus market.

When purchasing boots, I use the following criteria in evaluating them:

1. Boots utilizing the Norwegian welt are the most desirable. The Goodyear welt is second.
2. Eyelets are better than hooks for lacing the boot. Hooks catch on obstacles and bend.
3. Vibram® lug soles provide excellent traction. Look for the yellow label.
4. The uppers of the better-quality boots are made from one piece of top-grain hide. Roughout boots, due to the problem of waterproofing and assessing quality, should be avoided.
5. Boots should have a well-padded interior with a tongue sufficient to keep water and debris out.

The most important aspect of footwear is fit. A poor-quality boot that fits well is superior to a well-made boot of the wrong size. When purchasing new boots, your street-shoe size is not the determining factor. Most often, the correct boot size is larger, since hiking boots are usually worn with two pairs of socks — one of light nylon, one of heavier wool. This practice keeps the feet drier and blister-resistant. Once the boots are selected, the fun starts.

Breaking in a new pair of boots is one of the least enjoyable things I can think of. Never begin an operation with a new pair. (Any experienced foot soldier can verify this.)

With GI and hunting-style boots, break-in is a hassle, but can be accomplished quickly. However, the backpacking-style boots are another story. Due to the stiffness of their leather, break-in is slower and more painful. Oldtimers (anyone with more than one enlistment) swear by the "soak-the-boots-and-walk-them-dry" method. I have never tried this, mainly because I usually spend enough money on my boots to be worried about their care. My technique is to gradually break them in by wearing them in and around home and on trips to town. Within two weeks of steady wear, even the stiffest hiking boots become pliable enough for long-range operations.

When breaking in new boots, you may be tempted to use Neetsfoot or some similar oil to soak them: Don't do it until you have checked the tanning process used in your boots, since this determines the correct leather dressing to be used. Chrome-tanned leather deteriorates when treated with oil. This deterioration will significantly affect support afforded by the boot, and in some cases the upper will separate from the sole, due to the leather stretching around the stitching. Oil-tanned leather will accept an oil dressing without harm. If in doubt, ask the salesperson or the boot's manufacturer what the best method of dressing and waterproofing is. The current silicone sealers are probably the best and safest compounds for waterproofing boots.

In summary, my choice for footwear would be the Vietnam boot for tropical climates. It is sturdy, well-designed and inexpensive. Most surplus outlets sell them for about $30 per pair. Beware of cheap imported imitations. In temperate zones or for rough terrain, I would choose the low-cut, commercial, backpacking boot, or Special Forces mountain boots by Chippewa. If you purchase a commercial backpacking boot, buy a medium to heavyweight design. I own a pair of Technica IIs made in Italy — excellent boots.

Don't buy lightweight boots — they won't stand up to prolonged use. Avoid the full-shank mountaineering boots because they are too heavy and do not flex enough for comfortable walking over long distances.

Anyone who spends more than a short time in the field realizes that an army does indeed travel on its stomach — and you'd better believe that after a day in the field you'll hear that concept loud and clear. In a mechanized unit or one operating with close support, this is a relatively easy problem to solve. Hot chow is either trucked to the unit or C-rations can be opened and heated.

Long-range recon patrols and special-warfare units present another problem. Freeze-dried foods are the best bet for LRRPs in areas with uncertain forage possibilities and in which operational requirements dictate concealment. Light, reasonably palatable and easy to prepare, they are excellent for their intended purpose. Quality varies. Your best bet is to buy from a reputable manufacturer such as Mountainhouse or Richmore. Be sure you can eat what you buy before you go to the field — sample it first.

Boiling water to reconstitute or rehydrate the food to an edible state requires a stove or another heat source. Because natural fires take time and give out smoke, which could compromise tactical concealment, a serviceable stove is necessary. Technology has given us a wide selection of stoves, from simple Sterno in a can to incredibly efficient, complex, space-age stoves. While heat tabs are fine for warming a can of Cs, they just don't hack it when you have to boil two pints of water in a hurry.

Modern stoves use white gas

Continued on page 68

CAMPING EQUIPMENT SUPPLIES

INDIANA CAMP SUPPLY
P.O. Box 344
Pittsboro, IN 46167
(Specializes in medical kits for bush operations.)

SIERRA DESIGNS
247 Fourth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

EASTERN MOUNTAIN SPORTS
Vose Farm Road
Peterborough, NH 03458

NORTH FACE
1234 Fifth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710

EARLY WINTERS
110 Prefontaine Pl. South
Seattle, WA 98104

TRAILWISE
2407 4th Street
Berkeley, CA 94710

(REI) RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT INCORPORATED
P.O. Box C-88-125
Seattle, WA 98188

OUTDOORS, INC.
5245 Poplar Avenue
Memphis TN 38117
(No catalog; carries all major brands, specializes in bulk quantities of freeze-dried food and food survival packs. Contact Lawrence Migliara for price quotes.)

The big Air Force troop transport touched down gracefully on the glistening wet runway at Pleiku in the central highlands. The soldiers sat silently, some of them with their faces pressed against the small oval windows, trying to get a first glimpse of this place called Vietnam. The C-141 turned off the runway and taxied slowly toward the far end. The same thought I had been thinking all year popped into my mind.

Had I made a mistake by enlisting in the Army? I didn't have to be here. I had fulfilled my military obligation in '55 by joining the Navy. Now, 11 years later, I was in the Army and in a foreign country about which I knew nothing except what I'd read in the papers and seen on TV.

The Air Force sergeant opened the door; I hadn't realized the plane had stopped. Everyone remained in his seat as if waiting for someone else to make the first move. Finally the aisle began to fill as the men shuffled slowly toward the exit. I worked my way into line and walked down the steps. I was prepared to fall on the ground if shooting and shelling started. I was pleasantly surprised to find it peaceful and rather quiet. It had been raining; the air had a fresh, moist smell. As I looked around, I could see helicopters lifting off on the far side of the airfield.

Over by the edge of the aircraft parking ramp, a long line of GIs stood quietly, watching as the new arrivals filed from the plane. They wore khaki uniforms, and their duffel bags lay beside them. Obviously, they were on their way home. There were no smart remarks or catcalls from them. Instead, they stared at us with tired looks of pity on their faces. They knew what lay in store for us during the next year. They also knew some of us would never see home again.

Recognizing a friend getting off, a black soldier shouted, "Hey, Grady, about time you got your rump over here." Grady made his way through the crowd. They shook hands and slapped each other on the shoulder.

A captain and a first sergeant in jungle fatigues drove up in a jeep. The captain got out and walked over to those of us who had just arrived. "You men assigned to the 25th Division, grab your gear and get on those buses over there," he said, motioning toward several twin-engine prop planes.

I found my duffel bag and headed for the planes. An Army Sp/5 grabbed my bag and threw it in the cargo opening. Two Army warrant officers, one a W-3 and the other a W-2, stood by the plane. They were the pilots. The W-3 said, "You fixed-wing or chopper pilot?" as he eyed my wings.

"Helicopter," I replied.

Operation Paul Revere II

AIR ASSAULT INTO LZ HELL

LEFT: "Cold" extraction by slicks of C Company, 229th AHB, 1st Air Cav, north of Bong Son near coast of Vietnam. RIGHT: Warrant Officer Sisk flying right seat in slick of C Company, 229 AHB, 1st Air Cav., over central highlands, RVN.

Text & Photos by Robert Sisk

"Nuts," said the W-2. "I thought you might be my replacement. Well, you'll get plenty of flying where you're going," he added with a grin.

The plane lifted off and flew just under the low-lying clouds at about 300 feet above the ground.

I unfastened my seat belt and made my way up to the hatch that led into the cockpit. "They've got an automatic direction finder at An Khe, but it seldom works," the W-2 said. "We have to go low-level through Mang Yang Pass when the weather's bad."

"That's the pass just ahead," said the W-3. "That's where the Frenchies got their butts kicked back in the '50s." He adjusted the rpm on the props. I could see the rusted hulks of tanks and armored personnel carriers lying alongside the highway. French Mobile Group 100 had been ambushed below and lost more than 2,000 men in this pass. Many of them were buried by the Viet Minh in rows standing up on the hills that overlooked it — an effective bit of psywar.

The pilot lowered the landing gear as I walked back to my seat. As we touched down, I could see mud and water kicking up from the wheels. Back in Oakland, Calif., I couldn't understand why they told us to change into fatigues before we left the States. As I stepped off the Caribou into the ankle-deep mud, I figured this must be the reason.

After finding my mud-splattered duffel bag, I sloshed over to where several other newly arrived pilots were standing. Most of them were from my flight-school class. We were the replacements for the pilots who had come over with the 1st Air Cavalry Division 10 months earlier.

A major walked over and told us to leave our gear where it was and to follow him. He led us to a large tent about 150 yards west of the parking ramp. "Line up where the sign says 11th Aviation Group," the major said. "You'll get your unit assignments there." He turned and walked off.

After a 20-minute wait, I entered the tent. Inside, several soldiers typed and sorted papers. This struck me as humorous. It looked like a well-organized, orderly office at any Army post in the States — but with a dirt floor with little pools of rain water scattered throughout.

I handed the sergeant my orders. He separated the copies and put them in different stacks. "Any particular unit you want to go to, sir?" he asked as he handed back a copy of my orders.

"I'm not familiar with any of the outfits," I replied.

"Well, the 227th and 229th are assault-helicopter battalions. The 228th is the support battalion. They fly the big Chinooks," said the sergeant.

"I guess the 229th will be fine," I said.

"Okay," he said, starting to write. "Do you want to fly slicks or guns?"

"Who is getting the most flying time?" I asked.

"The slicks do more flying but if you want lots of shoot-'em-up, the gunships get most of that," he said.

"I'll fly slicks; I want the flight time," I said.

"All right, Alpha, Bravo or Charlie Company?" he asked, looking up.

Hell, I thought, I didn't know it was so damn complicated to sign up for a war. "C Company," I replied, picking the last one he had mentioned.

"As soon as I get everyone processed in, I'll call the units and someone will be down to pick you up," he said, still writing. I walked out of the tent and into a steady downpour. Officially, and on paper, I was in the war.

Three of us, Owens, Blair and myself, were assigned to Charlie Company. The company executive officer picked us up in a jeep and drove us to the company operations tent at Camp Radcliffe, named for Maj. Radcliffe, an Army aviator, and the first member of the Air Cavalry to die in combat in Vietnam.

The XO told us that the company had just come back from a tour of duty down by Tuy Hoa and was now responsible for perimeter patrol at Camp Radcliffe and provision of air-assault helicopters for the ready reaction force. It also resupplied the local fire bases.

Two days before Charlie Company's return to An Khe, four air crewmen were lost in the final phase of Operation "Nathan Hale." The slick had been hit with either an anti-aircraft shell or an artillery round, disintegrating it and killing all on board. A memorial sevice was held that evening for the dead crewmen. I didn't attend.

I was one of the dead pilot's replacements. I was assigned his living quarters. Some of the other pilots were clearing out his locker and putting his personal belongings in a box. One of the pilots cried silently. I felt very bad. I was scared.

The next day, Capt. May, the operations officer, introduced us to the company commander, Maj. Williams, and the other pilots. I was scheduled to fly with Chief Warrant Officer Hollis Scoggins. We were to fly a training mission and then some resupply runs to the firebases.

Scoggins requested a west departure with a right turnout. An Khe tower gave us immediate clearance for takeoff. I eased the collective up, added left pedal to counteract the rotor torque and lifted the Huey to a hover. A quick glance at the instruments showed everything in the green. I eased the cyclic control forward, pulled a little more pitch and we moved smoothly forward in an immediate climb. We climbed to 500 feet and started a right turn.

"Turn to a heading of zero nine zero," Scoggins said. "We'll go over to Phu Cat and do some autorotations." Phu Cat was about 25 miles east of An Khe. We paralleled Highway 19 for a while and then the road suddenly veered southeast, dropping down into a valley.

I flew the next several days with Scoggins, learning the methods of combat flying that he and the other "first in the country" pilots learned the hard way. Scoggins returned to the States the following week, his tour of duty completed.

On the first day of August, 1966, the 1st Air Cavalry joined with the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, in Operation "Paul Revere II." The 3rd Brigade had made contact with elements of four North Vietnamese army regiments.

The operation was the 50th for the Air Cavalry since its arrival in Vietnam.

My company, "Charlie" or C Company, 229th Assault Helicopters, was dispatched to Landing Zone Oasis, a forward firebase southwest of Pleiku. Our area of operations extended from Pleiku to the Cambodian border and included the Chu Pong Mountains and the Ia Drang Valley, all covered by thick, triple-canopy jungle. At LZ Oasis, the first battalions of the 7th and 12th Cavalry plus units of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, were massing for air assaults.

During our briefings, we were told all of the landing zones would probably be "hot" and booby-trapped. The weather was exceedingly bad: torrential rains, low-lying clouds and ground fog. This was to be my first combat air assault. I was nervous and excited.

Aircraft Commander (AC) Warrant Officer Sisk (right) with co-pilot W.O. Erekson, after 18 hours' continuous flying in C&C ship over An Lao Valley, central highlands, RVN. Note gunner's aircraft-adapted M60 in door of ship in background.

The door gunners and crew-chief made last-minute checks on their machine-guns and loaded belts of ammo into the gun chutes. The infantrymen were busy writing letters and preparing for the air assaults, checking packs, cleaning weapons and hooking hand grenades to their belts.

Several LZs were to be assaulted simultaneously. Slicks from the 227th and 229th Assault Helicopter Battalions were to air-assault the grunts into the LZs while the big Chinooks of the 228th would sling the artillery into place once the LZs were secured.

We lifted off in flights of four. Once airborne, the helicopters joined up in a diamond formation. Mine was the tail-end of the four-ship formation. Chief Warrant Officer Neil Stickney was the aircraft commander; I was the co-pilot. Our flight would be the second wave into the landing zone, following four slicks from the 1st Platoon of Charlie Company. We were to maintain a one-minute spacing between formations. Behind us were two more flights of four ships each, for a total "gaggle" of 16 helicopters. On each side of the gaggle, B-model Huey gunships from Delta company flew shotgun for the assault helicopters.

Each helicopter was assigned a color code with a number — small plates on each side for easy identification. This helped the infantrymen find their assigned helicopter and it also determined the position in the formation we would be flying. "Wagonwheel Six" was designated the code name for Maj. Williams, who was flying the lead ship, Yellow One. He gave orders to the aircraft commanders to have their door gunners test-fire the M60 machine guns. From the open doors of the ships ahead, I could see short bursts of tracer rounds spewing from the guns. Stickney told our gunners to fire a burst. The rapid chatter of each weapon was reassuring.

"Two minutes out," the flight leader said on UHF radio. Up ahead I could see smoke and explosions in the intended landing zone. The dark smoke and bright reddish-orange flashes of the explosions stood out against the low clouds and patches of fog. An artillery battery from a distant firebase was pounding the landing zone with high-explosive rounds.

"Last round on the way," a voice suddenly blurted over UHF. One ship in the flight was usually assigned to monitor the artillery FM radio frequency to advise the flight leader when the barrage was ended. The last round was "Willie Peter" (white phosphorus).

The Willie Peter burst in the center of the clearing, a billowing cloud of thick,

ABOVE: B-model Aerial Rocket Artillery (ARA) gunship, or "hog," carrying 48 2.75-inch HE rockets, which may be fired in any combination or all at once. Note 2.75-inch rockets at rearming stations on either side of ship with protective metal covers on rear over fins and electrical contacts. LEFT: Warrant Officer Sisk holds shrapnel from blown ammo dump, collected from area around his tent. Note Air Force-type survival knife and .45 automatic worn by flight crews.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After a brief stint in the U.S. Navy following graduation from high school in 1955, Robert Sisk first learned to fly fixed-wing aircraft in 1962. In 1965, at the age of 28, Sisk enlisted in the U.S. Army under the Warrant Officers' Flight Training Program. Following graduation from rotary-wing flight school, Sisk served two years in Southeast Asia, accumulating more than 1,800 flying hours. His first year overseas was spent flying slicks with "Charlie" Company, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Air Cavalry Division, RVN. Sisk flew more than 1,059 combat hours with Charlie Company, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star and 23 Air Medals.

Sisk spent his second year overseas in Thailand supporting the Thai Queen's Cobra Regiment in Vietnam.

Sisk presently has over 8,000 hours total flying time, and holds commercial license and instrument ratings for multi-engine fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft.

Sisk lives on a small farm about 40 miles north of Boise, Idaho, with his wife Kathy and three boys.

—Jim Coyne

white smoke. "One minute out," the flight leader said. Two aerial-rocket-artillery (ARA) helicopters suddenly appeared and made firing runs down both sides of the landing zone. The ARA ships broke off their rocket runs and went into a daisy-chain holding pattern, west of the LZ. The first wave of slicks touched down. I could see the door gunners raking the jungle with machine-gun fire. Soldiers spilled out both side of the choppers and crawled for the nearest cover.

The gunships had made the initial approach with the first flight, firing machine guns and rockets. They then swung around and escorted the next flight into the LZ. One of them was fitted with an M5 grenade launcher, and I could see it firing into the tree line. It looked like a fat kid spitting watermelon seeds.

"White flight short final," the platoon leader of our flight said. The first flight of slicks were still holding in the LZ while more grunts exited. Timing was critical because the following flights were on final approach.

"If they don't get the hell out of there, we'll have to make a go-around," said Stickney. Then the flight on the LZ lifted slowly and began to accelerate straight ahead and away. I locked my shoulder harness and lowered the visor on my helmet. A few weeks earlier, another assault company had lost an aircraft when the windshield was shot out. Neither pilot had his visor down; the shredded plexiglass blinded them both. The helicopter crashed, killing the crewchief.

"We're in contact; the LZ is hot, the LZ is hot," an excited voice suddenly blurted over the FM radio. As we touched down I could see grunts lying flat behind rotting trees and giant ant hills. To the northeast of the clearing a steady stream of tracers poured from the dense tree line of the jungle.

"We've got automatic-weapons fire east side," the same excited voice said. "We're pinned down. Wagonwheel Six, can we get those ARA ships back in here?"

"Affirmative, Blue Fox. Do you want just the east side hit?" Wagonwheel Six asked.

"Roger, for now. We've got a heavy machine gun in the northeast corner and small-arms fire all along the east side," replied Blue Fox.

"White flight is up," Stickney said, meaning all of the grunts were clear of the helicopters.

"Lifting," the platoon leader replied. All four helicopters lifted off, still in the diamond formation.

A long stream of tracers arced up at White Two, the helicopter on the right point of the diamond. "We're taking a lot of fire," the aircraft commander of White Two said in a calm, matter-of-fact voice.

"Green and red flights, go to a staggered trail formation. We've got room in the LZ to do it. It will give you better coverage," Wagonwheel Six said.

"Blue Fox, this is Black Knight Six. Do you want your reserve platoon brought in?" the battalion commander, orbiting in the command-and-control helicopter, asked. Normally the C and C helicopter would orbit high over the LZ. But because of the low clouds, it had to remain low-level, well off to one side of the battle.

"If we can get that heavy gun knocked out, I think we'll be okay," Blue Fox replied.

"Blue Fox, this is Hog One; we're starting our run now," the ARA flight leader said. "We've got enough fuel for about two runs apiece," he added.

"Okay, concentrate in the northeast side," said Blue Fox.

White Flight made a left 180-degree turn and I could see the next flight of helicopters lifting from the landing zone. Streams of tracers continued to pour from the dense foliage on the east side.

The first ARA ship was just pulling up after its rocket attack on the heavy machine gun. As the helicopter broke to the right, I saw a flash of fire from the right rocket pod. Smoke trailed from the pod and the flames were get-

ting bigger. "We've got a pod on fire and I can't jettison it," said the pilot of Hog One. "I'm going to put it down on the LZ." The ARA ship continued in a right turn. The last flight of slicks was just lifting off as the burning ship rolled out level and approached the landing zone. Suddenly, the flaming rocket pod exploded. The helicopter rolled violently to the left. A large piece of rotor blade broke off as the ship went inverted. Losing forward momentum, it plummeted straight down.

"We've bought it," the pilot of Hog One said just before the ship hit the ground. It lay partially on the LZ, its broken tailboom sticking out of the heavy jungle growth. The whole aircraft was in flames. Several soldiers ran in a low crouch toward the wreckage. They were still being fired at from the tree line. "I'm going to land," said the pilot of the other ARA ship.

"Negative; stay on station. We've got people on the ground that will get the crew out," said the battalion commander.

"Black Knight Six, three of the crew are dead. The fourth one was thrown clear but he's hurt real bad," said Blue Fox.

"Okay, we'll get dustoff in there to get him out," replied Black Knight. "Also, I'm going to send your reserves in. Wagonwheel Six, pick up the ready reaction force at Oasis and assault them into the same landing zone," he added.

"Roger," said Wagonwheel Six.

"We can't get a medevac right now; they're all busy," Black Knight said a minute later. "Wheel Six, can you send one of your ships in to get that crewman out?"

"Affirmative, sir. Green Four, break out of formation and do the medevac. Keep both gunships with you," said Wagonwheel Six.

Green Four broke from the formation and made a left turn back into the landing zone. The two gunships continued to make firing runs on the east side of the clearing. The remaining ARA ship had knocked out the heavy machine gun and was returning to Oasis with its fuel critically low.

We returned to Landing Zone Oasis and picked up the ready reaction force. We air-assaulted them into the same LZ, this time receiving very little ground fire.

Next morning we were completely socked in by ground fog. I had spent a miserable night trying to sleep inside the helicopter. Four crewmen could barely stretch out inside, and the continuous downpour found its way through the roof of the ship and into my sleeping bag.

About 1400 hours, the weather broke temporarily and the 3rd Platoon of Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, was air-assaulted into Landing Zone Pink, coming into immediate heavy contact with a reinforced company of North Vietnamese regulars. The 26 men of the 3rd Platoon were completely surrounded — and the fog had socked the LZ in again.

At LZ Oasis we were again on standby with the infantry ready reaction force. We were told to crank up and attempt an assault to help the surrounded platoon.

Yellow One, the flight leader, lifted into the fog while the other ships held on the ground. He climbed steadily through the fog bank and broke through the layer at 500 feet. One by one, the helicopters climbed out through the fog and joined up with the

others. We were now between two cloud layers, southwest bound. Yellow One was trying to raise the platoon under attack on the radio but couldn't make contact. Another platoon at Landing Zone Orange broke in and said they could hear us above the fog but the visibility was zero at their location. The radio operator said they hadn't had radio contact with the 3rd Platoon in over an hour.

"I'm going to make a slow descent through the fog and see if I can get into the LZ," said the flight leader. Yellow One rolled off to the left as the rest of the flight, in an echelon-right formation, continued straight ahead. Yellow One disappeared into the fog. In about two minutes he popped back out and rejoined the formation. "I can't get under this crap," said the flight leader. "We'll orbit for a while and see if this stuff will move out."

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SNAKEPIT

After Operation "Paul Revere II," we thought we might get a few days' rest back at Division HQ at An Khe, but we were surprised to learn that Charlie Company would be going directly to Phan Thiet, a small coastal town about 150 miles southeast of Pleiku. The 2nd Battalion of the 7th Cavalry was already en route on Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft.

C Company's helicopters topped off with fuel at Pleiku and departed for Phan Thiet. I was assigned to fly with Capt. Ehnman. We were told to stop by An Khe, our home base, and pick up mail, aircraft parts and any personal belongings the air crewmen needed. Departing An Khe, we climbed to 9,000 feet for a relaxing flight to Phan Thiet. When we looked down on the rice paddies around Tuy Hoa, it was hard to believe that death and destruction were taking place in such beautiful countryside.

We landed at an airfield built by the French during the French Indo-China War. C Company set up camp just south of the airstrip. Waist-high grass covered the area — a probable home for poisonous snakes. I would feel more comfortable facing a dozen Viet Cong hand-to-hand than one snake, of any kind.

Two days after our arrival, the operations sergeant went into his tent. He had just opened his laundry bag to put in some dirty clothes. As he started to push them into the bag, a cobra suddenly thrust its head out of the opening. The sergeant let out a blood-curdling scream and ran out the back of the tent, hitting a tent rope which caught him in the neck and knocked him to the ground.

Everyone heard him scream. They ran over to where he lay, gasping for air. When he got his breath, he told us about the cobra in his laundry bag.

Sgt. Lynn put his M16 on full-automatic and stepped cautiously inside. Looking around, he saw the laundry bag with a bulge in its side. He slipped the safety off and fired a whole clip of ammo into the bag.

Sgt. Lynn reached out with his rifle barrel and probed the bag. Warily, he picked it up and began to shake out the clothes. He emptied the bag, without finding the snake, holding up the ventilated clothing, some still smoldering from tracer rounds. Although we didn't know it, the snake had crawled out of the bag and slithered out the tent front.

The operations sergeant, having recovered from his bout with the tent rope, saw his bullet-riddled clothes and went into a cussing fit, giving Sgt. Lynn the opportunity to go the route of the cobra. He slipped out the front, running for the safety of his own tent.

This relaxing bit of humor was quite a change after the stress and action of Operation "Paul Revere II."

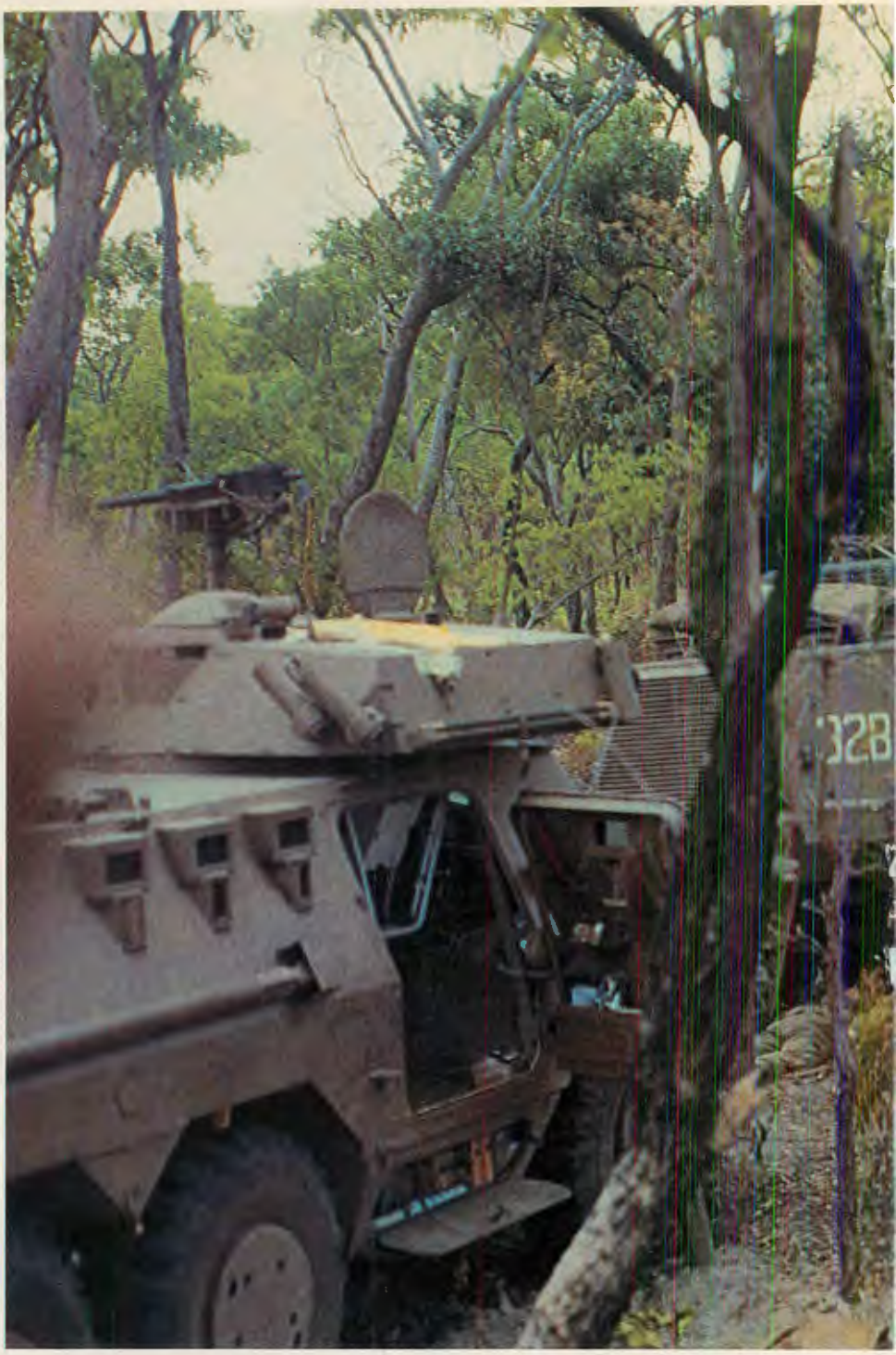
I had survived my first month in Vietnam. I had 11 more to go.

—R.S.

Slicks of C Company, 229th AHB, 1st Air Cav., on short final approach into LZ on CA, carrying troops of 2/7th, 1st Air Cav.

On 1 November last year, South African ground and air forces swept into Angola where they destroyed an important SWAPO (South West African People's Organization) regional headquarters and military command post and killed 71 guerrillas in a major strike code-named Operation Daisy. This was the deepest thrust into Angola by South African ground forces since the 1976 Angolan war, when, although within easy reach of the Angolan capital, Luanda, the South Africans were forced by political game-playing to withdraw to neighboring South West Africa/ Namibia.

I was one of six privileged journalists, invited by the South African Defense Forces (SADF), to witness the recent action during the latest of a series of cross-border operations.



BATTLES BEYO
ANGOLA'S B

SOF Joins South Africa's Opera

ENGINES screamed and my stomach churned as the old DC-3 rushed from the blue African sky in a spiral dive down to the Angolan bush below.

This seemingly crazy descent was a necessary precaution for landing in enemy territory. For down there in the bush, SWAPO terrorists could be lurking with SAM-7 missile launchers, waiting for a chance to blow us to eternity. We had flown in the DC-3 (Douglas Dakota) from neighboring South West Africa at 12,000 feet — beyond the effective range of SAM-7s — and had come down fast to land on the bumpy little landing strip carved out in the Angolan bush many years ago by Portuguese colonial forces.

Ionde was the landing strip's name. Its four dilapidated buildings were situated in a clearing to one side of the runway. Built as a military outpost by the Portuguese in colonial times, and more recently used as a forward base for SWAPO terrorists for raids into South West Africa, Ionde was now occupied by combined South African and South West African forces, which used it as temporary tactical headquarters and forward medical base in their latest military strike — code-named Operation Daisy — which aimed to destroy SWAPO in its sanctuary.

Three days earlier, a colonel from Defense Headquarters in Pretoria had notified me that something big was about to happen and that I, along with five other war correspondents, had been invited along. Secrecy veiled our instructions.

"Report to Waterkloof Air Base at 0730 tomorrow. This is something big. Travel light, in military gear if possible, and prepare for anything from one to three weeks in the bush. Don't talk to anyone, not even your girlfriend," the colonel told me.

...OND ...ORDER

...tion Daisy

Text & Photos by Stephan Terblanche

Column of South African Ratel armored infantry vehicles assembles at site of SWAPO base shortly after attack during Operation Daisy. These formidable vehicles detonated 11 landmines, but South African Technical Services Corps troops repaired all damage on the spot.

Being a regular Citizen Force soldier, I donned my Army-issue brown bush uniform, and reported to the air base Sunday morning, 1 November. Still not knowing where we were headed, I arrived that evening with a few colleagues and military personnel, on board a C-130 transport at Ondangwa air base in the South West Africa Operational Area. After spending the night at operational headquarters, Oshakati, 35 kilometers from Ondangwa, we were informed that Operation Daisy had been launched the previous day. We were to be flown into Angola to meet up with mechanized ground forces on their advance to the target area, some 240 kilometers inside southeastern Angola.

An intelligence officer briefed us. Operation Daisy was to be the follow-up operation to the highly successful Operation Protea some months before. (See "To Russia With Love," SOF, January '82.)

Whereas Protea had been the largest strike into Angola to date — resulting in clashes with Angolan FPLA (Popular Front for the Liberation of Angola) soldiers and their Russian masters and yielding millions of dollars worth of captured Soviet military hardware, plus the killing of several Russian officers and the capture of one warrant-officer — Operation Daisy was to be more low-key.

Protea and other previous operations had resulted in SWAPO having scattered all over southern Angola and running from one base to another. The terrorist force's cross-border operations into South West Africa had been severely hampered and the insurgents demoralized.

Having only recently regrouped in southeastern Angola, the terrorists maintained a regional headquarters and command post at a place called Chitequeta, code-named Bambi by the South Africans, some 240 kilometers from the South West African border. This was the target, and the aim of Operation Daisy would be to deal a devastating blow to SWAPO's logistics and destroy its military-command set-up.

The plan was first to secure the landing strip at Ionde, some 120 kilometers from the border. A large mechanized column left South West Africa and crossed into Angola on Sunday and, with the aid of a helicopter fire-force, was to secure Ionde.

Once the air strip had been declared safe, Dakota transports would land, bringing in more personnel and supplies.

A tactical headquarters would be established at Ionde, as well as a forward medical base. The air force would initially have its helicopter administration HQ at Ionde. Several Alouette helicopters later made supply and medevac runs from here to the main target area at Bambi.

Tuesday, our Dakota landed at Ionde, only hours after the first-wave assault had seized the landing strip from SWAPO. I looked around after stepping from the plane. Except for a few light spotter aircraft parked alongside the runway and a couple of anti-landmine Buffalo troop carriers, the place seemed deserted.

Then, as if from nowhere, uniform-clad men stepped from the high grass and dense bush surrounding the runway. As my eyes grew accustomed to the harsh sunlight and the seemingly impenetrable bush, I noticed the dug-in line of men positioned in a defense perimeter around Ionde, as well as supply trucks and Buffalos standing camouflaged under tall trees.

A young officer stepped out, asking us to follow him to the four run-down buildings constituting the "town" of Ionde. On the 200-meter walk to the buildings, we were cautioned not to step off the narrow pathway for fear of landmines. Around the buildings we saw a network of underground bunkers and connecting tunnels built in classic terrorist style.

One of the buildings, with the Portuguese lettering, *Posto Do Medico Do Ionde,* still visible on its faded, bullet-scarred walls, had been converted into a medical post complete with emergency operating table and intravenous drip racks. Against one wall was stacked a pile of stretchers. Those would later be needed for the inevitable casualties. Nearing the medical post, I heard soft moaning and saw a group of men huddled over something. They were doctors from the South Africa Medical Services Corps and the moaning came from a young SWAPO insurgent who had received severe stomach wounds during the attack on Ionde. The South African doctors were patching him up, giving him the same medical care any of their own

ABOVE: Bunkers in SWAPO's southeastern command base at Chitequeta. They were destroyed by South African troops during Operation Daisy.

ABOVE: South African Buffalo anti-landmine troop carrier burns in Angolan river bed. LEFT: South African Medical Corps personnel treat SWAPO guerrilla wounded during Operation Daisy. BELOW: A South African DC-3 transport rests on the runway at Ionde, just recently captured from SWAPO forces.

wounded would receive. Approximately 30 minutes later, the terrorist was medevacked to a military hospital at Oshikati in South West Africa.

SWAPO offered very little resistance during the attack on Ionde. One terrorist had been killed, two wounded and several captured. Several contacts had been made with SWAPO elements around Ionde, developing into brief fire fights. No losses were incurred by the South Africans, though several of the terrorists managed to get away in the bush-covered terrain.

Although all was quiet by the time we arrived, tension was still tangible in the air. Soldiers squatted in their foxholes, eyes scanning the dark bush dwarfing Ionde's concrete buildings. It was midday and the heat was terrible. Some men ate listlessly from Ratpack rations and others smoked. Some of the braver entered the lice-ridden SWAPO bunkers for a little protection from the almost paralyzing heat.

(I was reminded of scenes from the movie, *Apocalypse Now*: tough black soldiers who sauntered around carrying captured Russian-made RPG launchers, LMGs and rifles with the same care a mother would show her baby. Adding to their fearsome look was black camouflage grease — dubbed Black is Beautiful by the troops — with which they had painted their hands and faces.)

Just before nightfall, my five colleagues and I were briefed on what lay in store for us. It had been originally intended that we join the

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Charlie Leatherwood sights in, using MPC/ART scope mounted on "G" series FN FAL.

STATE-OF-THE-ART SCOPE

Leatherwoods Take Aim At Civilian Market

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

LEATHERWOOD Bros., a name linked to the U.S. Army's sniper program since the Vietnam era, has recently announced a revolutionary new scope: the Military Police Civilian/Adjustable Ranging Telescope (MPC/ART), the civilian version of the Leatherwood ART II. The Leatherwood brothers are Jim, designer and developer of the ART system, and Charlie, head of the firm's marketing department.

In 1965, 2nd Lt. Jim Leatherwood entered the U.S. Army, bringing with him a recently patented new principle for an adjustable-ranging rifle scope that would raise and lower the rear of the scope like an open sight. It was a classic case of being in the right place at the right time. The military's sniper program had been almost nonexistent during the peacetime period prior to the Vietnam conflict. New and changing ideas in the field of sniping had been totally ignored. As the tempo of the Vietnam War increased, field-trained snipers were required as soon as possible. Sniper training had always been a time-consuming process. Range estimation and determination of the proper hold-over techniques demanded time, which was then of the essence.

Due primarily to the efforts of the Limited Warfare Laboratory at Aberdeen, the Infantry School, and the Advanced Marksmanship Unit at Ft. Benning, a sniper team was assigned to the 9th Infantry Division in Vietnam. It was armed with National Match M14s equipped with starlight scopes and Leatherwood's ART. Selected, competent marksmen were rapidly developed into effective long-range snipers without extensive training in range estimation and ballistics. The 9th Inf. Div. snipers did well enough to initiate a Vietnam-wide program of similar sniper training.

After serving 18 months in Vietnam, Leatherwood was sent to the Foreign Science and Technical Center in Washington, D.C., where he ended his Army tour in 1969. The following year he spent with the Realist Scope Co., where he further refined the ART concept. Afterwards, he devoted a short period of time to the production engineering department at Military Armament Corp. where he was successful in re-engineering the magazine position on the .45 ACP MAC-10. In 1972, Leatherwood stepped out on his own and began manufacture of the ART scope for the U.S. Army.

Looking through the ART II scope, the shooter immediately sees the visual heart of the concept. Three framing bars form the outer portion of the crosshairs, on the right, left and bottom. These identically thick posts sustend exactly one meter at 300 meters from the scope when viewed through 3x magnification. For military purposes, this would be approximately from the top of the target's head to the groin. The reticle and framing bars are non-magnifying. This is of key importance to the entire ART principle. Another essential element in the ART system is the use of a 3x-9x variable scope, the power ring of which is locked to the elliptical range-cam ring, which raises or lowers the rear of the scope as the power settings are changed.

In use, the ART II operates as follows: First the scope is zeroed in at 100 meters, using the internal adjustments of the side and top turrets. The power and range-cam rings are then locked together and the rifle is zeroed in at 300 meters and at all other ranges out to 900 meters. The shooter simply selects that portion of his target which he knows to be approximately one meter in height, and dials the power ring until that part of the target matches the thickness of one of the reticle framing bars. This will in turn raise or lower the scope the proper amount for whatever distance the target is from the rifle.

Human Engineering Is Leatherwood's Hallmark

The ART II scope differs from all previous models of the ART system, since it can be used with the power and range-cam rings in the unlocked mode. Using the method previously described, the shooter brings the rifle to zero on the desired target. The power and range-cam rings are then unlocked, and without moving the range-cam ring, the power ring is moved to whatever magnification is desired.

Human engineering has been a constant hallmark of Leatherwood's designs. Most scopes require you to remove your eye from the ocular, momentarily losing visual contact with the target, in order to manipulate the controls. With all ART scopes, the controls are back where they belong — at the eyepiece — an important consideration both to the military sniper and civilian hunter.

The ART II exhibits quality construction throughout, and goes beyond the stringent specifications required for military use. The heavy knurled eyepiece is non-removable. All moving parts are O-ring sealed. The turrets and caps are heavier and easier to manipulate than earlier ART scopes. Nothing on the scope can be disassembled inadvertently. The exterior of the scope is hard-anodized, then painted with Sandstrom 9A and baked at 400° F. Leatherwood bases are all finished in the same manner. This finish, which is also used on the M16, is impervious to all corrosive agents.

The ART II uses different range-cam rings for each caliber and bullet combination. Units delivered to the U.S. Army are equipped with the 300-900 meter .308-match-bullet range-cam ring. All scopes supplied to the military come with a rubber-sealed fiberglass scope can which is designed to withstand the heavy impacts of airborne operations. At this time they are not available to the public.

Leatherwood mounts are just as impressive as their scopes. The ART II M1A/M14 mount is attached to the rifle by two large thumb screws, instead of just one, again an indication of the constant evolution and improvement of Leatherwood products. Proper installation of this mount requires the drilling and tapping of the M14 clip guide to accept the second thumb screw.

I had never fired a scope-mounted FN FAL that could retain zero or wouldn't exhibit at least 8 to 10-inch groups at 100 meters. My West German army 4x Hensoldt scope uses the sheet-metal FAL receiver cover for a base, as does the Canadian army Leitz "Elcan" unisight and the British army Trilux. The Leatherwood FN FAL base completely replaces the stamped sheet-metal receiver cover, which is the direct source of the problem. The Leatherwood base is securely clamped to the FAL receiver so that all zero-disturbing movement is eliminated, without interfering with standard field-stripping and cleaning procedures. The extremely rigid Leatherwood FAL base is reinforced with steel recoil screws to further ensure a steady zero with even the heaviest scopes, such as night-vision devices. Leatherwood also manufactures an excellent base for the M16 series.

Armed with one of the current .308 match-grade FALs, equipped with an ART II scope and base, Charlie Leatherwood and I drove over to their test range during a recent visit to the Leatherwood facilities. The range is adjacent to the Leatherwood factory; both lie on the family ranch just outside of Stephenville, Texas. Shooting at man-sized silhouettes and gongs at unknown distances from 600 to 900 meters proved to be a startling experience. Sixty rounds and 60 hits later, I

ART II scope.

could say with all honesty that the ART system works.

Such perfection does not come cheaply. The ART II scope with M1A/M14 base is $650. Most of the ART II scope production is directed to fulfillment of the U.S. Army contract. As a result, delivery of civilian orders can take up to six months.

Determined to bring the ART concept to the public, but handicapped by their own plant's almost total commitment to the production of ART IIs for the Army, the Leatherwood brothers approached one of America's oldest and most-respected scope manufacturers, the W.R..Weaver Co. of El Paso, Texas. Aimed at the multiple-use market, the totally new MPC/ART scope is built by Weaver to Leatherwood specifications for quality control and performance. The MPC/ART scope is a direct descendent of the past developments in ART-scope technology. Featuring a unique universal-ranging cam, the MPC/ART scope allows the user to "curve-fit" and fine-tune the scope to whatever caliber or load he is shooting.

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View through ART II scope shows framing bars which sustend one meter at range of 300 meters.

Closeup of Leatherwood MPC/ART scope shows trajectory cam ring and power ring locked together.

Closeup of Leatherwood MPC/ART scope, showing the trajectory cam ring and power ring locked together.

Closeup of massive, knurled turret caps on Leatherwood ART II scope.

Closeup of eyepiece (ocular) and trajectory cam ring and power ring on Leatherwood ART II scope.

1982 S.H.O.T. SHOW

Fire & Ice In Atlanta

by John Metzger

MORE than 16,000 dealers, distributors, manufacturers, manufacturer's representatives and members of the press convened at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta from 11 to 13 January to see what's new in the industry — the Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade industry, that is — hence the name: S.H.O.T. Show.

Eleven January was the second coldest day in the city's history: five degrees below zero. We Colorado folks were expecting a balmy southern clime, where we could sip mint juleps under magnolia trees. But no. When the snow hit on the afternoon of the 12th, it was as if the stock market had crashed and Atlanta were under siege. The city was stricken. Everything stopped: traffic, people, news, money, food, booze. One-half inch of snow combined with southern humidity made driving suicidal for the inexperienced, and about 10,000 cars lay abandoned, their victims making tracks to various "comfort stations" — churches, gymnasiums, hotels, etc. The Okefenokee Lounge atop the Sheraton was packed with survivors, and when the booze ran out, they began to fight over choice sections of carpet space. After a night at the hotel's crisis-relocation center, hearty SOF staffers took the subway to the show, and glory be, it was still on.

The fourth annual S.H.O.T. Show, sponsored by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), saw 675 company exhibitors touting their wares to prospective dealers and buyers — everything from decoys to harpoon guns. Staffers present felt there had been an increase in paramilitary products over past shows, with emphasis on survival-oriented items. Innovations in weaponry were apparent, especially in optics and sighting systems. "Survival" seemed to be the catchword.

SOF staffers spent three days oohing and aahing at all the new goodies. We weren't able to test them there, but we took close looks at some items that we felt our readers would be interested in. Here are some products that we photographed as examples of choice items. From our contacts made at the show, we will, in future issues, be evaluating some new products firsthand, and we'll conclude our S.H.O.T Show coverage next issue.

ODIN IMPORTS . . .

Odin International is now importing a line of mean-looking Yugoslavian-made weapons. We looked at five of these new guns.

Odin is importing the Valmet M82 short "Bullpup" in caliber 5.56mm-x45mm (shown above). It will be on the market by the time this article is printed and will cost $1,189. Valmet has modified the basic Kalashnikov action into a Bullpup design.

"It takes a little getting used to at first," says Tom Nelson of Odin, "but when you get the feel for it, you can shoot it like a submachine gun or rifle with ease. It fits right into any suitcase or backpack."

Right now, the M82 is available in semiauto only. Weight is 3.92 kg with full 30-round magazine (a 15-round magazine is also available), and 3.3 kg empty. It is 26½ inches overall with a 16½-inch barrel. SOF's Peter Kokalis will be testing the M82. Look for his evaluation in a future issue.

Called the Zastava, the Model 70AB folding-stock semiauto rifle fires a 7.62mmx39mm cartridge and is endowed with standard Kalashnikov features — from barrel length to magazine capacity. It has a price tag of $1,195 and should be available late this summer. Full-auto may be available as well.

The AK with wooden stock (in upper right corner p. 57) is the Zastava Model 70, and is identical to the Model 70AB without folding stock. Above the Model 70 is the Zastava sniper rifle in 7.92mm (8mm Mauser). Weapon has a barrel length of 21 inches and comes with 10-round

magazine. The sniping rifle should be available in full-auto as well. The scope is Yugoslavian GI with designation "ON-76." By turning the knurled knob on the right side of the reticle, a sunscreen appears over the field of view. Elevation and windage adjustments are the standard type found on most sniping scopes. This rifle will sell for $2,895 with scope, and $1,995 without.

Also available in this group of AK-type rifles is the Zastava M77 (not pictured), an improved Kalashnikov design in 7.62mm NATO with a 20-round magazine. Price will be $1,295.

The Zastava Sport Model 59/66A1 is basically a Yugoslavian variant of the SKS in 7.62mmx39mm. It will retail for $795 without the folding bayonet, which is optional. The gun weighs eight pounds and has a 22-inch barrel.

The Zastava line is impressive, and SOF looks forward to testing and evaluating them. When we do, we'll let you know what we find. The Zastavas are GI for the Yugoslavian army, and all should be available late this summer for the first time in the United States.

The Valmet M78 semiauto rifles and sniper system were also on display at the show. The system comes in three calibers: 7.62mm NATO, 5.56mm and 7.62mmx39mm. The M78 is available now for $1,495 retail (see "SOF At The Finnish Line," SOF, October '81, p. 63). For more information on these Odin-imported products, contact **Odin International**, Dept. SOF, 818 Slaters Lane, Alexandria, VA 22314. Phone: (703) 549-2508, or 549-2506.

ISRAELI EAGLE . . .

Magnum Research Inc. is the exclusive U.S. agent for the Eagle .357 Magnum pistol produced by Israel Military Industries (IMI). The Eagle is a large, semiauto, gas-operated, single-action pistol. The gun seemed almost ungainly, but we haven't had the chance to feel it in action. However, Magnum Research had a videotape of a live-firing demonstration, and the shooter seemed to be plinking away with no handling problems.

Slide operation was smooth and disassembly simple (no tools are necessary). The ambidextrous safety locks the firing pin and disconnects the trigger. The center of gravity is forward of the trigger for quick recovery during rapid fire.

Overall length with standard six-inch barrel is 10¼ inches; height is 5½ inches and width 1-1/16 inches. Other features include rotating six-lug bolt; positive bolt lock-up; six-inch barrel is standard (eight and 14-inch barrels are available); seven-shot capacity; wrap-around soft-rubber grips; Parkerized black finish; adjustable trigger pull; combat-style sight and combat-style trigger pull for two-hand hold. The Eagle is built to IMI standards with 100-percent machined-steel parts — no pressed or stamped parts whatsoever. The barrel is hammer-forged (cold-swaged) steel.

The standard Eagle will retail for $590, and should be available late this summer (due to its commitment to research and product improvement, IMI specifications, design, options and features are subject to change without notice or obligation).

At the show, we met weapons designer Israel Galili who represented IMI at the Magnum Research booth (see "Weapons Wizard Israel Galili," SOF, March '82). For information on the Eagle, contact **Magnum Research Inc.**, Dept. SOF, 2825 Anthony Lane South, Minneapolis, MN 55418. Phone: (612) 781-3446.

Yugoslavian-made Zastava Model 70AB folding-stock semiauto rifle in 7.62mmx39mm.

7.92mm (8mm Mauser) Zastava sniper rifle with ON-76 scope (above). Zastava Model 70 with wood stock (below).

SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown and weapons designer Israel Galili examine 7.62mm Galil assault rifle.

Zastava Sport Model 59/66A1, Yugoslavian variant of SKS in 7.62mmx39mm.

STERLING MARK 6 . . .

Robert Johnson of Parker Arms of Texas caught our eye with the piece of equipment in this photo. The Sterling, one of the most widely sold submachine guns in the world (120 nations), is now available in the United States as the Mark 6 semiauto carbine. The Mark 6 is identical in appearance to the Sterling submachine gun except that its barrel has been lengthened to conform with U.S. regulations. The Mark 6 is manufactured by Sterling Armament Ltd. of England — known worldwide for its reliable, battle-proven designs — and exhibits the same high standard of quality as the submachine gun. Each weapon is tested and proofed by the British government before shipment.

Each Mark 6 is supplied with a 34-round magazine, carrying sling and eight-inch display barrel. Length with stock folded is 27 inches, and barrel length is 16.1 inches. Operation is blowback with floating firing pin, in semi-automatic only. Minus the 34-round clip of 9mm Parabellum, the weapon weighs in at 7.5 pounds. Approximate muzzle velocity will vary with ammunition, but the factory claims 1,250 to 1,500 feet per second. Maximum range is 2,000 meters at a 30-degree angle.

The Sterling Mark 6 is imported exclusively by **Parker Arms of Texas**, Dept SOF, 5420 Lemmon Ave., Dallas, TX 75209. Phone: (214) 522-5871.

Continued on page 89

An Aerial Ballet

MARINE IN-FLIGHT REFUELING

Text & Photos by Marv Wolf

DOWN below it is dark and gloomy. Eight-foot waves rage across the unsettled Pacific. But up here at 21,000 feet the sun is brilliant, and the clouds below are lovely, three-dimensional circles and whorls, tiny portions of some cosmic fingerprint, with the darkened sea showing through ragged holes. Off to the north, very high and far away, a Pan Am jumbo leaves a fine white contrail as it hauls a few hundred tourists to leis, luaus and alohas.

We are goosing along at 210 knots, flying southwest, maybe 50 miles off the Navy and Marine Corps Gunnery Range on all-but-barren San Clemente Island, off San Diego. Each of our four Allison T-56 jet turbines is purring near max horsepower, better than 4,000 each, and our KC-130R, an airplane that went wheels-up for the first time in 1962, is performing as faithfully as ever.

A faint voice crackles unintelligible jargon in my earphones, and the two enlisted Marines keeping me company near the tail of our flying gas station awake from naps. Well, maybe they were just meditating. This is a long, usually boring business. We fly out to our station from the base at El Toro, 50 miles south of Los Angeles, and we do the orbiting number. Fifty miles, straight ahead, find an invisible point in the sky, turn left for five miles, left again and back 50 to where we turn left for five, then left again and 50 more, back and forth, an orbit bounded by civil air space and the range of our customers. And now it is time to go to work, serious business ahead.

The crewmen take their stations at the troop doors on either side of the rear fuselage, clipboards in hand, and begin to scan the clouds for what they refer to as receivers.

This time they are F-4 Phantoms, the mainstay of Marine air-to-air combat, and — not incidentally — a pretty fair weapons platform for close ground support. These particular F-4s have been dropping an assortment of rockets and bombs against targets on San Clemente Island, and now they would like to have enough JP-4 to get back home. Which is why we are here.

In the belly of our KC-130R is a great, shiny, stainless-steel tank, and in it 3,600 gallons of fuel. Another 2,800 gallons are in wingtanks. We are going to pump some of this stuff into the F-4s, which have appeared like phantoms out of the mists and are now snuggling up, one on each side, like hungry pups coming home to momma dog.

Marine Corps Phantoms and A-6 prepare to "snuggle up to momma" KC-130R tanker.


DANGER
DANGER
UNITED STATES MARINES
VMGR-352

Up on the flight deck, Maj. Jerry Schroeder, the command pilot and operations officer of Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352, is sitting on the right side so his co-pilot, Capt. William Bush, can get in some flight time. Schroeder says something to Bush, who hunkers down a little deeper in his chair. Little beads of perspiration form at the base of his hairline and run down his neck, staining his flightsuit. The milk-run part of the mission is over.

What Bush has to do is keep his big, slow tanker cleaving a track in the sky. He boosts the rpms to max, around 13,800 each, and then he puts the nose over just a bit, so that the tanker will "toboggan," descend at a slow but steady rate, and thus gain some airspeed. The airspeed indicator moves with glacial swiftness to about 220 knots, where it hovers, ever so slightly. The tanker is going as fast as it will go.

The problem is that the tanker is built to fly long and slow, and the F-4 is built to fly fast and short. It will not stall until airspeed drops to around 155 knots, but its control surfaces were made to handle a lot of air flow, the kind of flow that a pilot finds at upwards of 400 knots. At 220, the Phantom's stick is a bowl of mush, and the fighter does not respond with the fluid grace that the pilots prefer.

And fluid grace is what's needed, just now, because while they are being refueled the faster jets must fly tight formation on our tanker. But first there is the matter of hooking up.

Gunnery Sgt. Jim Greene is the flight engineer today, and he reaches up to the rows of switches and meters in the overhead panel, and starts his refueling procedure.

Under each wing is a huge, streamlined pylon, and in each pylon 85 feet of six-inch flexible hose attached to a 26-inch drogue. The drogue is a cone-shaped object, a collection of nylon vanes that anchor the hose on one end. It is open at the tail. "The drogue lets that hose go out into all that turbulent air behind the wing and fly pretty much straight and level," explains Gunny Greene.

Command Pilot Maj. Jerry Schroeder examines prop KC-130R.

FLIGHT SIMULATOR: THE ULTIMATE ELECTRONIC GAME

The price of jet fuel and spare parts being what they are, military aviators spend some of their "flight time" in the pilot seat of flight simulators. The Marines' only KC-130R flight simulator is at El Toro, and the Navy, which has only a few C-130s, has none. So aircrews from both Navy and Marine squadrons train at El Toro.

Actually there are two KC-130R simulators, but one is not a total simulator — it lacks a visual ground display and is stationary. The Marines use it primarily to train flight engineers, who are not required to maintain flying skills that include landing and taking off. Their function is limited to operating equipment, diagnosing and sometimes fixing it if it fails.

The simulator is the ultimate electronic game, an $8.5-million cockpit identical to the one in a real aircraft, with every switch, instrument and control hooked to a computer which feeds information designed to simulate every conceivable flying situation. Some of them are very unlikely, but they *could* happen, or have. The pilot's simulator sits on 10-foot movable struts in a cavernous room. Through the windshield, a display that looks like an airfield on a smoggy day in late afternoon is visible.

I am not exactly a pilot, though I have flown some for SOF and more for the Army, way back when. So as I settle into the left-hand chair of the simulator, there is not only the reassuring familiarity of the basic controls, but also that little tightening of the chest, the acceleration of pulse, the genuine sense of danger that I always feel in the moments before takeoffs and landings.

In the right chair is Gunny Bill Davis, a flight-engineer type who is in charge of this simulated flight. He goes through the preflight checklist, knowing it by heart but doing it for me by the book — hand on this knob, flick those switches, once, twice, look at that gauge, reset that other doohicky, push the levers forward a tad, on and on, for five minutes. Out of sight, the computer takes all this in, and when it is time to start the "engines," a realistic roar from hidden speakers fills the cockpit. Perhaps I am imagining it, but I could swear I smell hot oil.

Takeoff instructions from a flight controller hidden somewhere in the computer's memory disk crackle in my headphones. Gunny Davis places my hands on the quad throttles and shows me how to advance them together to full race and, sure enough, those make-believe engines scream louder, the cockpit rocks, and as I release the brakes we lurch forward, and the sinking sensation in the pit of my stomach reminds me that only part of my brain knows this is a simulation.

Steering down the runway as we gather speed, I try to keep the nose on the center line, steering with a tiny handwheel near my left knee. It's delicate work; understeering is the only way it works. Somewhere around 100 knots, not quite ready to leave the ground, I crash through the line of parked planes to the left of our runway here at March Air Force Base, which is where the computer program has us lifting off.

Horns honk, a red light goes flash-flash-flash, and we shake every which way. I have crashed my first takeoff, and outside, down on the floor, a half-dozen real pilots are holding their sides. Fortunately, this is only a simulator, and I have not killed everyone and wrecked one of the Corps' 45 KC-130s, which cost about $5.5 million in 1962 dollars.

Instead the Gunny backs up the computer tape. We are once more back on the runway, rolling toward the parked planes, but this time he shoves the throttles to the firewall and rudders right as he hauls back on the wheel. We are airborne. We stooge about for half an hour, and I get something of the feel of this bird. Every now and then, just to keep things interesting, an engine catches fire or the nosewheel locks halfway down, one emergency after another, input by Gunny Jim Greene (my flying companion on the earlier, real flight), who sits out-of-sight behind a curtain and creates the emergencies through the computer.

When it is time to land, we have somehow approached El Toro. And why not — on the computer-disk memory are the visual recreations of nearly every runway and airport and cross-country route in the country, and many from overseas.

As we slow for the descent, our speed drops to about 110 knots. We drop at 500 feet a minute toward a pair of flashing lights that mark the runway approach. The gunny tells me to watch my altitude gauge, and I see we are coming down too fast, so I haul back on the stick. We promptly stall, a skidding, stomach-stabbing sensation. The gunny straightens us out and gives it back to me, and I try to get this plane down. Bumpbumpbump, red lights and horn. I have crashed again. It's smiles and handshakes all around, but I get the idea no one is sorry I did not try to become a Marine pilot.

On the way out a civilian technician shows me a tiny tube with a mirror, which, he explains, is the component that the video display uses to look at a tiny model of the appropriate airfield or cross-country route. It's about the size of my thumbnail. —M.W.

ABOVE: U.S. Marine Corps F-4 Phantoms attack NVA targets along Ho Chi Minh Trail, summer 1969. Photo: McDonell Douglas BELOW: G/Sgt. Jim Greene takes immediate action for simulated engine fire, using KC-130R simulator, at El Toro, Calif.

Although Air Force F-4s and some Marine jets have permanent, external probes or receptacles to take fuel, the Marine Phantoms have instead a retractable probe, which is stored in a housing on the right side of the nose. During refueling, the probe comes out of this housing and extends forward. So the jet pilots must execute a sort of aerial side-straddle-hop, moving sideways and forward, and shove that six-inch-diameter probe into the center of the 26-inch drogue, where there is a positive locking device. "It takes more pressure to release than to lock," explains Maj. Schroeder. "So once the probe is in and we're pumping fuel, there can be a little —but not much—uncoordinated movement between the receiver and the tanker."

Putting the probe into the drogue can get pretty interesting at 220 knots, nose over, with 85 feet between the end of the hose and the wing of the tanker, and a lot less than that between airplanes.

If the Phantom pilots are to learn how to do this in combat, they must practice somewhere, and that is what we are doing now. And if that side-straddle-hop at 220 knots with several tons of airplane is not made perfectly, their Phantom and our Hercules might wind up trying to occupy the same airspace at the same time, and as every serious student of air-to-air collisions knows, this is not good.

Which is why up on the flight deck Capt. Bush is perspiring, and it is also why the lone civilian aboard, your faithful correspondent, is not complaining about the parachute he was asked to wear.

LEFT: Maintenance is performed on KC-130R at USMC Air Station, El Toro, Calif. BELOW: Flight Engineer G/Sgt. Jim Greene switches on fuel pumps of KC-130R.

After a few false starts, everyone is flying very close and very straight, and the left-side receiver makes his side-straddle-hop, misses the drogue just a tad, backs off, tries again, misses again, and gets it the third time. The flight mechanic, a young sergeant named Lane, shakes his head, lifts my headset off my ear and yells, "Must be a rookie. But watch this other guy."

I shuffle over to the other side, and watch as the F-4 eases up behind the drogue, then moves ever so s-l-o-w-l-y into the drogue and zip, he's in. The two observers, plugged into the tanker's intercom, tell Gunny Greene that everybody is hooked up, and Greene flicks a couple more switches, and the pumps start.

So we are flying at something less than 21,000 feet, hooked together with two F-4s, and 300 gallons of JP-4 a minute is flowing through each hose. We are getting more than 3,000 pounds lighter every minute, and each of the F-4s is getting heavier, and we are all flying just as tight as can be. But the job's not over till the paperwork is done. Each of the observers is writing down the tail and squadron numbers of the jets we are fueling, and when they disconnect, as they soon will, Greene will look at his gauge and tell each observer how much fuel each jet took. Later on the paper shufflers at VMGR-352 will send a bill to the paper shufflers at the fighter squadron.

But for now it is disconnect time, a process considerably easier than hooking up. The F-4 pilot on the left side slowly reduces his speed, the breakaway coupling disconnects, and the big jet falls off to one side and below. Then the same process on the right side. The observers report the disconnect to the flight deck — no one up there can see what's going on

in back — and while we make ready for the next set of empty tanks, the fueled Phantoms join up a few miles away, and lead-foot it back toward home. I was glad no one asked me to slip over there and squeegee a windshield.

On today's mission the refueling is controlled by Navy flight controllers sitting at radar screens back at San Diego. When an F-4 needs fuel, the pilot calls the San Diego controllers, who give him a vector and distance to our location, or rather to what our location will be when he gets there, since we are constantly moving. On longer over-water flights with more tankers, this air-traffic function may be assumed by a Marine or perhaps a Navy C-9, a modified DC-9 that acts as a flying communications center.

Air-to-air refueling is an essential part of Marine aviation, and it comes in two types: the kind we are doing, and the low-level kind. "In the tactical environment, and especially if we are up against an enemy with surface-to-air missiles — like the North Vietnamese had — we may have to do our aerial refueling as low as 500 feet off the deck. We practice this over near 29 Palms," explains Maj. Schroeder. "If he can't see us on radar, he can't hit us," he adds. "So we fly between mountain ranges, down low, where we're lost in the ground clutter."

Author Marv Wolf glances over shoulder of Maj. Jerry Schroeder, command pilot and operations officer for Marine Aerial Refueling Transport Squadron 352. On Wolf's left is co-pilot William Bush. G/Sgt. Jim Greene, flight engineer, is in background.

And air-to-air refueling is essential as part of the Marines' worldwide strategic mission, the more so since the creation of the Seventh Marine Amphibious Brigade, which is likely to be the spearhead of the Rapid Deployment Force. The 7th MAB, essentially a Marine infantry regiment stationed at Camp Pendleton, and a composite aircraft group to be assembled from earmarked fighter, attack and helicopter squadrons at El Toro, is ready to move to the Persian Gulf on very short notice. Of course

AIR FORCE AND MARINE TANKERS

One of the mysteries of military life is how each service winds up doing something that is essentially the same as something done by another service, but doing it in a much different way. And so, surprise, surprise, the Marines' approach to aerial refueling is much different from the Air Force's. Air Force tankers are KC-135s, jet tankers capable of speeds in excess of 500 mph. The Air Force tanker fleet is equipped with permanently installed booms — a flying probe — and tail turrets, which provide a "male" fitting which is inserted into the "female" receptacle on Air Force aircraft, including F-4s similar to the ones the Marines and Navy use.

On Marine and Navy aircraft, the "female" fitting is at the end of the tanker's hose drogue, and the "male" on the jet fighter. The Marines and Air Force both use CH-53 heavy-lift helicopters for similar missions, but while the Air Force's refueling system is equipped to refuel these 240-knot helicopters, the Marine system can't and so Marines don't practice air-to-air refueling of helicopters. What this means in terms of mission accomplishment is that the Marines and Navy must depend on their own assets for aerial refueling, and the Air Force, with similar aircraft, must depend on its own assets.

One possible explanation of this situation is that the KC-130 refueling equipment used by the Marines may be removed from their aircraft without a great deal of effort and the aircraft may then be used for other roles, such as troop carrying or cargo delivery. The refueling equipment, essentially an internal tank and the two external pylons, might also be eventually used to outfit some future generation of tanker plane, something the cost-conscious Marines are typically concerned with.

Or there might be another, more political explanation for the fact that Air Force planes cannot refuel Marine Corps planes, and vice-versa.

The Air Force has for a long time coveted the high-performance aircraft of the Corps, on the grounds that air support and fighter protection are Air Force missions. (You may recall the 1965 controversy about the Army's OV-1 Mohawk recon plane. The First Air Cavalry Division had installed bomb racks and rocket pods on some of these aircraft, and used them in close air-support. The Air Force objected to this usurpation of its role, and eventually the Secretary of Defense settled the matter by allowing the Army to keep the planes — but only if the ordnance-delivery systems were removed.)

The Marines regard their air component as an integral part of their fighting force. They would just as soon give up their tanks and artillery — or their dress-parade sabers — as their airplanes. (Making it a little tougher to interchange Air Force and Marine airplanes makes it a little tougher to interchange missions.) It's one more barrier against the Marines' loss of their aviation component. No Marine officer will confirm this, but when the question is asked and the above reason suggested as a possible explanation, Marine aviators tend to smile and wink and nod, and ask to go off the record. On the record, the standard reply is: "We use the system that works best for our mission."

— M.W.

they're ready to move almost anywhere on very short notice, but the leading edge of any sort of deployment would be the air element.

Marine F-4s, A-4s and A-6s have a ferry range of about 1,000 miles. So to get beyond that they need refueling, and if any part of the hop is over water, that means air-to-air refueling. Hence VMGR 352, which has 21 KC-130s, and is based in California looking west, and a sister squadron at Cherry Point, N.C., which has a similar strength and looks east. On Okinawa there is a third squadron, but it has no planes of its own, so VMGR 352 provides several on a temporary, rotating basis.

Squadrons frequently go back and forth between Hawaii and California. When they do, KC-130s fly out to be on station over the Pacific for refueling. In a typical operation, Maj. Schroeder explained, several tankers will go out about 800 miles and set up an orbiting cell, flying a pattern similar to the one we flew — 50 miles in one direction, left for five, and left again for 50. Another group will go out 1,600 miles for the second leg, and a smaller group — perhaps just one tanker — will fly out from Hawaii and orbit about 200 miles out as a sort of safety net. "That way if there's a plane in trouble or something unexpected happens, there's one more place to get gas between the second cell and Hawaii," says Schroeder.

REFUELING DURING VIETNAM WAR

Air-to-air refueling was vital to the operational success of the air war against North Vietnam and Laos during the fighting in Indochina. B-52 strikes, for example, would have been impossible without in-flight refueling, because the Air Force was acutely conscious of the vulnerability of the big bombers on the ground and therefore based them in secure areas, notably Guam and Thailand.

But it was the smaller aircraft, especially the F-4s which were used both as MiG killers and attack planes against point targets, which proved the worth of aerial refueling. SOF Aviation Editor Dana Drenkowski flew B-52s on his first Vietnam tour, and F-4s on his second, operating out of Da Nang initially and later from bases in Thailand. Most of the F-4 missions were flown against NVA, Pathet Lao or ChiCom targets moving munitions down the Ho Chi Minh Trail, or against targets in North Vietnam.

"Like most fighter planes, the range of the F-4 is exaggerated in print. The range is figured and reported in places like *Jane's All the World's Fighting Planes*, based on hypothetical figures, which include a clean airframe, one with nothing hanging under it. I don't think anyone ever actually flew a profile that had that range on it. When you start hanging tanks, bombs, rockets and missiles, the plane can have difficulty getting a target 350 miles from a base and back. So we had to have a tanker," explains Drenkowski.

"On a couple of raids we did plan to get in and out without the use of a tanker, but it meant doing everything exactly right. But on the one mission that I went on like that, we prebriefed that we would pickle-off (drop) everything under the airplane, on the target, because we knew we would have a tough time getting back. The only reason we did it that particular time was because we thought we could do it, once, without tying up the tanker force, so that they could fly another mission elsewhere," he adds.

In Vietnam the ability to refuel attack planes in the air was critical to their mission success. "It gave us an awful lot more flexibility. Normally, if we went to hit even a nearby target — even one in South Vietnam — we would have only about 10 minutes over target. Once you get over the target area you kick the speed up, because even in the south where there were no MiGs, there were always SAMs [Surface-to-Air Missiles] to worry about. Once you start kicking up the speed you also start kicking the fuel out the back," explains Drenkowski.

"But if you hit a tanker going in, then you've got half an hour, 45 minutes maybe, in loiter time, while the FAC[Forward Air Controller] puts in other planes, or hunts for a better target, or looks for one that went under cover. So now instead of having to punch your bombs off at a suspected target — or an open field somewhere — you can wait until you're sure of your target, and then you're sure to hit it. We used to have tankers on station all the time, and if it were a good target we'd call up our airborne radar controllers, and they'd vector us to a tanker. So then we would hang on the tanker awhile, until the FAC told us he had our target located, and then we'd go in and get it. We had tanker tracks over Laos and also over the Gulf of Tonkin.

"We would refuel our F-4s between 18,000 and 24,000 feet, at about 280 knots," he explains. "The Air Force refueling system works like this: The guy in the boom turret would be looking directly at the fighter planes, and he would direct them in to the boom. In effect, he'd be flying their planes. At night it was much harder because there were few visual cues. On the belly of the tanker were two rows of lights, which they would flash to get us lined up. We called them 'captain's bars' because that's what they looked like when you were perfectly aligned for hookup."

One of the missions Drenkowski flew regularly was cover for the famed Spectre gunships. These were AC-130s outfitted with as many as four 20mm Vulcan high-speed cannons, a pair of 40mm guns and sometimes a radar-sighted, computer-assisted 105mm howitzer that fired out the open rear-cargo door at targets of opportunity — usually tanks on trucks headed south on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. "We'd run a three-ship formation — three F-4s, loaded with iron bombs, or fire bombs, or Cluster Bomb Units (CBUs). This is a lot of drag, especially when we had to go in low — about 10,000 to 14,000 feet — to find the Spectre. Normally we'd orbit around 18,000 feet.

"The Spectres had a real problem, because they were particularly vulnerable to anti-aircraft gunfire. It was almost all night work, using low-level-light TV, radar, infrared. And they were also vulnerable to SAMs — including the SA-7, the shoulder-fired missile. So we'd go in with a three-ship, and I'd put two planes on the tanker while I smoked in over the Spectre. And we'd set up a cycle, so that one F-4 was always on the tanker, one was covering the Spectre, and the third was somewhere en route between the two. We'd plan, time it out beforehand, so that we didn't have to talk much on the radio. Sometimes I'd take all three ships in at first so they could get a look at the area; then I'd hang over the Spectre and the other two would go back to the tanker. And we'd go after the guns. We could always see the flashes — everything was pitch-black — when they fired, so then we'd go put a CBU on them or some MK36 WP (white phosphorous or Willie Peter), whatever.

"The tankers were not supposed to go up into MiG country, but there were a number of emergencies when they did. It was strictly illegal, but the tankers did respond when we needed them. There were a couple of times when they flew right into Haiphong Harbor to refuel our guys. On one occasion, if they hadn't come we'd have lost four ships — and eight men — because they were almost dry and they never would have made it back," says Drenkowski.

—M.W.

KILLERS

Continued from page 33

dressed in a tweed leisure suit. But he had the face and slurred speech of an old wino.

"Hello, cobber," Jack said.

Sure enough, this man had been in Jack's company in Korea. He launched on a long, disjointed remembrance of experiences they had shared, and explained that his daughter and son-in-law were keeping him now. They had celebrated his birthday the previous evening, and kept his glass full all night.

"This is me myte, Jimmy Morris," Jack said. "We were drinkin' with Killer Ballentine just last noight." We shook hands. It was like grabbing a sponge full of dishwater.

"Killer, eh?" And this sparked another round of war stories.

I didn't want to knock Jack's friend, but when he left I said, "He doesn't seem to be right on top of it."

"Aghh!" said Jack. " 'E's gone! Shouldn't even be aloive. Most of 'is stomach's missin'." Then Jack did something I had seen him do three or four times in the last couple of days. He raised his glass and stopped halfway to his lips. Stopped dead, rigid, as though he had stepped out of time, and his eyes were somewhere else. It was not a thousand-yard stare, but as though he were sharing a toast with a whole lot of people I couldn't see. At such times he had the mouth of a child, but his eyes were the oldest things I have ever seen. It only lasted a second and then he meditatively sipped his beer.

"We alwyes called 'im Killer," he said. "He was with a special unit for seven years, you know."

"He mentioned that."

Jack smiled a little. " 'E's in love with me woife."

I nodded. "He told me that too, but he said he couldn't tell you, because you'd kill him."

Jack smiled. " 'E's a good lad, Killer is. There's no 'arm in 'im. 'E's all shot full o' holes now though."

For the first time I noticed Jack's right arm was much thinner than the left. "What happened to your arm?"

"Ah! Took a round in me neck. Affected the nerves."

My own right arm is somewhat withered, missing a couple of nerves and an artery from gunshot wounds, something else we had in common.

"Bad feet, bad arm, the lot," Jack said. "But I'd do it all again."

"Yeah," I admitted, somewhat ruefully. "Me too."

Things are much simpler where you don't know the people you hurt.

"Did you know Ray Stevens in the 8th Field, Jim?"

I shook my head.

"Black Australian warrant officer. 'Is woife was Japanese, and the government denoied 'er pension because she 'adn't been an Australian resident for foive years. Two kids. 'E 'ad the Victoria Cross, the lot. The RSL finally got a special bill passed givin' 'er a pension of two 'undred a month. Wot'll that buy in Tokyo todye, Jim? Coupla fish 'eads and roice. We're still workin' on gettin' 'er the full pension. We'll get it for 'er."

Soon it was time for him to go. We went to the door and shook hands. I watched him go to the stop light. He never looked back, only waited for the light to change, and stepped off the curb with his left foot, taking thirty-inch steps, 120 to the minute.

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THE COMBAT BOOKSHELF

MATERIEL

Continued from page 41

(Coleman fuel, not automobile-pump gas, which may foul the stove), propane, butane, kerosene and denatured alcohol. Backpacking in America, while often rugged, is not warfare. A Sterno stove is a summer-camping, weekend-hiking item, good for heating a cold can of pork and beans, but it is an inefficient system. Stoves that require propane or butane fuel cylinders should be avoided. Although they are efficient, additional fuel cylinders may be hard to find in some parts of the world — and I am not sure I would want a pressurized can of fuel in my backpack in a fire fight. Also, in cold weather, you must sleep with the fuel cylinder to keep it warm enough for proper functioning.

The two best fuel choices for mercenary operations are white gas and kerosene. White gas is available throughout America (usually in the form of Coleman fuel, which is very close but not exactly the same) and almost everywhere in Europe — but not in the underdeveloped countries. Three excellent white-gas stoves are the Svea 123 (for use by one or two men), the Coleman Peak I and the Optimus 8R. All three are relatively light and efficient. The Svea 123 weighs the least, but it requires some skill to light, especially in cold weather. Once lit, it is very efficient. The Coleman Peak I and the Optimus 8R are heavier but more efficient in terms of heat production and use. The SVEA 123 requires the fuel source to be heated for proper fuel atomization. The Coleman simply requires that the fuel be pressurized by a small hand pump attached to the fuel tank. The Optimus 8R requires no pumping. State-of-the-art stoves such as the MSR (Mountain Safety Research), Model 9A or MF (multi-fuel) are very efficient and extremely light, but so complex that they are better left in the mountaineering and backpacking environment.

My first choice among the white-gas stoves would be the Coleman Peak I, and the Optimus 8R is second. Although gas stoves are excellent for use in America, they are not for the mercenary who must be prepared to function in underdeveloped areas. For this reason, I feel that a kerosene stove, such as the Optimus 111, is a better choice.

The reliable Optimus 111 is an older, proven design. Kerosene, while harder to light than white gas, is available nearly worldwide. This stove is easy to carry and start. It is large enough to serve small groups

well enough so that each team member does not need to carry a separate stove. I have used it in the humid tropics, Colorado High Country in winter and during amphibious operations. It works everywhere.

The Optimus 111-B is the white-gas version of the same stove. Special-operation units which choose to carry one stove for the entire unit would do well to look at it, since it is capable of supporting a squad-size group, but small enough to act efficiently for one or two men.

In a temperate-to-tropical climate, the mercenary needs to spend little time on clothing. The GI-issue cammie uniform (Army or USMC) is the number-one choice. Choose your environmental pattern — jungle, woodlands or desert — and your outfit will be better than anything commercially available. Add a field jacket and liner and your clothing needs are complete for all but harsh climatic extremes.

The only area with room for improvement is in rain gear. The GI poncho and liner are suitable for tropical use. Strong winds tend to make ponchos ineffective. However, for the most part they meet their design intentions. Within the past few years, the Gore-Tex® line of water-repellent yet breathable rain gear has had a heavy impact on the backpacking and mountaineering markets. Today, every major manufacturer markets at least one product utilizing Gore-Tex®. At first, this material did not function as its manufacturers claimed. Users reported soaked equipment and bodies. I'm told the seams are now factory-sealed on most Gore-Tex® garments, which solves this problem.

An alternate option to Gore-Tex® is urethane-coated nylon, which is certainly waterproof, but is not a breathable fabric. You soak from within by perspiration rather than being rain-soaked. This is especially true of urethane-coated rain suits (jackets and trousers). They are also time-consuming to put on and take off.

Gore-Tex® garments are expensive. I prefer the EMS poncho and rain chaps rather than Gore-Tex® products, the GI poncho or the urethane-coated rain suit. EMS rain gear is urethane-coated, but air circulates freely so heat and moisture buildup is not a problem. The backboard ponchos are neither viable nor necessary if you use a rain cover for your pack (as you should).

In summary, the equipment listed below, with which I have had direct experience in a survival environment, is appropriate for mercenary use.

Packs: Kelty Tioga and rain cover — a durable, well-made pack frame

and bag. (Coleman Peak I — close associates in the military report excellent wear and reliability.)

Sleeping bags: North Face bags have excellent design, construction and function. I prefer the Unimog for winter and Chrysalis for summer use. I have used the Camp 7 Pioneer synthetic bag as an outer bag (double-bag system) in winter with good results.

Tents: Free-standing A-frames. Trailwise Fitzroy II — excellent construction, roomy yet compact, and weathers very well. Earth-tone tent and rain fly. Other A-frames to consider: North Face Tuolumme and Sierra. Both come in earth-tone colors. More modern designs to consider: North Face VE 23 and VE 24 (color here is best for desert conditions).

Boots: Tropical environment — GI Vietnam boots — excellent; but the standard issue, not imports. Temperate environment — GI-issue black boots (they may lack support and stiffness for mountainous, rocky terrain) or backpacking boots, medium-weight. My personal choice is the Technica II from Italy; excellent-quality construction at a reasonable price; provides support for heavy loads and stiffness to inhibit stone bruises in rocky terrain. They accept waterproofing very well. Use a silicone-base preparation.

Stoves: white gas — one- or two-man Svea 123, a very good lightweight stove. Its only disadvantage is the preheating step for proper fuel atomization. Optimus 8R — a bit heavier than the Svea 123 but more efficient heat production. Coleman Peak I — excellent; my choice of all the white-gas stoves. It holds an ample supply of fuel, lights easily and the flame can be adjusted to simmer. Above all, it is well-made. White gas squad-size Optimus 111-B — a well-made, proven design; a bit heavy but very efficient. Kerosene stoves — Optimus 111. Same qualities as the 111-B. This stove is a bit heavy for one- or two-man use, but I feel it is better than the other kerosene stoves available. I may change my mind after using the MSR-MF for an extended operation.

Clothing: GI camouflage fatigues; pattern to fit your environment.

Please keep in mind that my recommendations are derived purely from my own experience and from reports from my associates in the military. There are many different brands of equipment that I have not mentioned that could just as well have warranted consideration in my evaluation. My purpose is to give the reader some guidelines in choosing equipment, and some examples of what is good and what is not-so-good for different situations. Your choice will surely differ according to mission, environment and time in the field. I don't want to tell you what to buy, but I hope you will choose carefully. A piece of equipment can seem insignificant in a store or supply house, but in the field, when it's all you've got, it may save your life.

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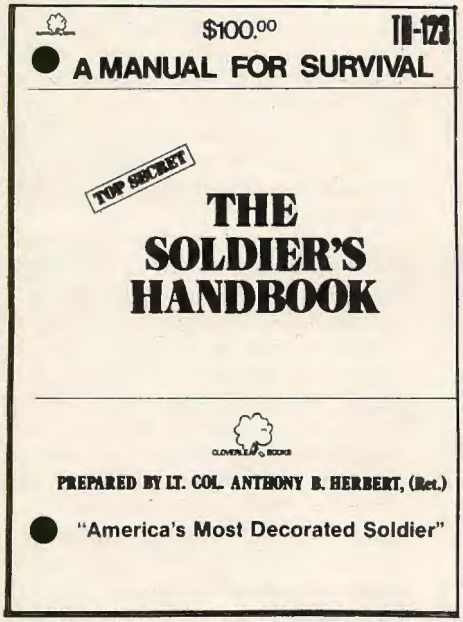

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ALL WARS

Continued from page 27

Legion with distinction before joining the OSS. Hasey, who also served in the CIA during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, said of Sweeny's Legion activities:

"It was my original intention to sign up with any outfit where there would be other Americans. Harry's New York Bar and Fred Payne's were clearinghouses for information to all Americans in Paris. I learned at these places that Col. Charles Sweeny was recruiting Americans for a national group in the Foreign Legion. Sweeny had an office at 71 Rue Saint Dominique, and it was understood that all Americans would be in the same regiment.

"I went to Sweeny's headquarters, and was directed to the Foreign Legion barracks. There I found hundreds of applicants of all nationalities, among them a large number of Americans. The line extended down the stairs and along the street. American Negroes and Africans in line were hard to distinguish, although American Negroes in France are generally classified as Indians. After waiting an hour or more for my interview, I discovered Sweeny to be in his mid-50s, about six feet tall, weighing about 165 pounds. He was crisp and businesslike, glad to have me in his infantry brigade. I left my name and address with him, and was told that if war broke out I would be called."

On 1 September 1939, WWII began and the volunteers for Sweeny's Legion brigade were mobilized. The U.S. Neutrality Act, however, dashed plans for an all-American brigade. Opportunistic French politicians chose not to offend the U.S. government and jeopardize American material aid. Consequently, all Yanks recruited by Gen. Sweeny were dismissed from the Legion shortly after their call-up. A few months after his discharge, John Hasey went to Finland where he was seriously wounded by the Soviets.

Left without his brigade, Gen. Sweeny resigned his Legion commission. The so-called "Phony War" had set in along the Maginot Line. On 30 November 1939, Russia invaded Finland, whose air force of 112 serviceable planes fought against 2,000 Soviet aircraft, downing 200 confirmed and another 80 probables at a loss of 67 destroyed and 69 damaged. Charles Sweeny and Vincent Schmidt went into action to raise an American *Escadrille Lafayette* for Finland.

Charles Sweeny began to recruit pilots in the United States to fly in Finland against the Red Air Force for $100 per month. He obtained 30 fliers. The war in Finland ended on 13 March 1940, before most of Sweeny's pilots arrived. In the meantime, Vincent Schmidt froze both feet in Finland and returned to France in bad shape. Yank air SOF Donald K.

Willis flew with the Finns, then with the Norwegians, and finally ended up in 121 (Eagle) Squadron, RAF. Hubert Julian also arrived in Finland, but did little flying. The American pilots recruited by Sweeny for Finland were now diverted to the French *Armee de l'Air.*

Charles Sweeny received prompt approval to raise a volunteer American squadron from the French air force. Among those recruited were Vernon Charles "Shorty" Keough, Andrew B. Mamedoff and Eugene Quimby "Red" Tobin, originally recruited for Finland and now rerouted to France; Chesley Gordon "Pete" Peterson, Arthur "Indian Jim" Moore and other USAAC "washouts." In all, Sweeny sent 32 Yank air mercs to Paris for service in a new *Escadrille Lafayette.* By June 1940, four were KIA, and nine were German POWs. Vincent Minor Schmidt evaded German capture and reached the United States, where he subsequently became a USAAF colonel and ended the war in Italy. Six of Sweeny's fliers escaped from France to England; five of them joined the RAF and were killed in battle: French Foreign Legion Sgt. Newton A. "Weak Eyes" Anderson, "Shorty" Keough, Andy Mamedoff, Virgil Willis Olson and "Red" Tobin — all of whom served in No. 71 (Eagle) Squadron. Additional recruits raised by Sweeny, including Peterson and Moore, did not reach France before the German blitz closed in on Paris.

While the Battle of Britain was in progress, Col. Charles Sweeny was traveling from America to England with more Yank volunteers. His nephews, Charles and Robert Sweeny, lived in London. Charles assisted his uncle by pressuring the British Air Ministry to form an independent American squadron in the RAF to be commanded by Col. Sweeny. Although RAF Fighter Command top brass opposed creation of an independent American air unit, British politicians endorsed the plan because of its propaganda value, and formation of the first Eagle squadron was approved in mid-July 1940. Eight Yank air SOFs flew combat missions as fighter pilots in the Battle of Britain between 10 July and 31 October 1940.

On 19 September 1940, No. 71 (Eagle) Squadron was activated at Church Fenton, Yorkshire. Col. Charles Sweeny formally entered the RAF on 16 September 1940, and soon attained the rank of RAF group captain, the highest rank ever held by an American in the RAF. Sweeny was also named "honorary commander" of the Eagle Squadron.

WWII was Charles Sweeny's 10th war and the British Union Jack was the 10th flag under which he served. Sweeny's recruiting efforts in America were now taken over by the Clayton Knight Committee in cooperation with the RCAF. By 7 December 1941, ap-

proximately 6,000 American SOFs had been recruited into the RCAF and were serving in Canada or abroad. An additional 760 were serving in the RAF. Not all were fighter pilots. Many served as bomber pilots, air crew members, ground crew members and instructors. Ten percent of the RCAF was American. Other Yank civilian pilots flew planes from Canada to Britain for the RAF Ferry Service.

Group Capt. Charles Sweeny pressured the British Air Ministry for the formation of two additional Eagle squadrons; he wanted to form all three into a fighter wing. When asked what he thought of his latest war, Sweeny replied, "Well, it's the only one we've got, so I guess we've got to think it is a good one." Sweeny had to contend with the death of his pilots, German night bombing, blackouts and constant complaints from all levels. He corresponded with Hilaire du Berrier, who had just returned to China from Sandakan, Borneo, where he had been on vacation prospecting for gold in headhunting country. Sweeny offered du Berrier a position in the Eagles, but the younger man chose to remain in his Chinese Nationalist intelligence position.

No. 121 (Eagle) Squadron was activated on 14 May 1941 at Kirton-in-Lindsay. The third Eagle squadron, No. 133, was activated on 29 July 1941 at Coltishall, Norfolk. Contrary to Sweeny's plan, these squadrons flew with different RAF fighter wings. A total of approximately 240 Yank pilots served in the three squadrons. Many were former USAAC "washouts" or rejects, who subsequently gained fame in the USAAF. Their starting pay as RAF pilot officers was the equivalent of $78 per month. Their opponents were first-class *Luftwaffe* pilots whose aircraft were also first class. For Sweeny's Eagles, it was hard going all the way.

At this time, Group Capt. Charles M. Sweeny's military philosophy was pessimistic. He declared:

"The soldier, and more particularly the general, looks out upon the world

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with different eyes from the common run of men. His dominant interest has not, like the rest of us, to do with the business of living but with the taking of life. Fundamentally he is not a creator, a builder, a provider, but just the contrary, a destroyer. He is a man full of contradictions — heedless but, at the same time, extremely painstaking; wasteful but parsimonious; cheerful and sad; irritable, but capable of endless patience.

"But above all things he is a pessimist. To him everything is transient. Today's bivouac is tomorrow's battlefield and the third day's hospital. Today's comrades are tomorrow's dead and wounded — lost, forgotten. Defeat and disaster are always imminent. Death is ever present."

Possibly the aging soldier of fortune desired to take a more active role in shaping the Allied victory in WWII. On 1 September 1941, at age 59, Charles Sweeny relinquished his RAF commission on appointment to a commission in the United States Army Air Corps. Charles Sweeny, one of America's greatest mercenary *condottieri* of the 20th century, was not present at the transfer ceremony on 29 September 1942, when his RAF Eagles became USAAF Eagles, but it was still a proud moment for him. He had returned to the United States earlier for a critical but constructive look at President Roosevelt's management of the war effort. In a parody of Winston Churchill's words, he wrote: "Never in the history of bureaucracy have so many done so little for so much."

By 1944, Sweeny was out of military service. He settled in Salt Lake City, Utah, with his wife, Eva, and son, Charles, Jr. After fighting 10 wars under 10 different flags, Sweeny needed a rest. Hilaire du Berrier, his comrade-in-arms, remembers the morning of 28 February 1963:

"I boarded a plane in San Francisco to do a lecture in Salt Lake City the following night. I bought a San Francisco *News-Call Bulletin* to read and the first lines that met my eyes were: ' "Sweeny of the Legion" is dead at 81. He died in a hospital bed in Salt Lake City of the infirmities of age.' It made me heart-sick. If I had reached Salt Lake before the 27th I could have seen him."

So died a great American who is almost forgotten today, except among an older generation of professional warriors. Col. Charles Sweeny of the French Foreign Legion, organizer of the *Escadrille Lafayette* and key founder of the RAF Eagle Squadrons, holds an imperishable place in the annals of mercenary warfare.

AIR ASSAULT

Continued from page 47

In the meantime, other ground units of Alpha Company were working their way through the heavy jungle toward LZ Pink. Around 1730, the fog thinned slightly and we were able to find the landing zone. The enemy had broken off contact after overrunning the platoon. Eighteen of the cavalrymen had been killed and the rest wounded. The survivors had played dead as the North Vietnamese stripped the soldiers of their watches, rings and billfolds. Sixteen of the enemy were found scattered around the battlefield. Later, shallow graves were found that contained several more bodies. We flew the wounded back to Pleiku and the KIAs were brought to LZ Oasis.

During the next several days, we flew resupply flights in and out of the landing zones. The weather continued to be a problem, but by flying low-level we managed to get the ammo and food in.

On 13 August, B-52s bombed an area known to contain a large concentration of NVA. The following day we assaulted it, using bomb craters and blown-out jungle clearings as our landing zones. Alpha Company of the 229th Assault Helicopter Company was to make the first flight in. They were to provide eight ships. My company (C Co.) provided another eight helicopters.

The landing zones were so small that only two helicopters could get in at one time. The approaches had to be very steep, almost vertical, because of the triple-canopy jungle. The first two Alpha ships started in. The LZs had looked fairly good from a distance, but up close the pilots could see jagged 20-to 30-foot stumps throughout the intended landing areas. The heat and smoke from the smoldering trees added to the precarious approach. As the helicopters closed on the landing zones, they began to lose power and life. A helicopter with maximum pitch pulled, trying to hover, will often cause the tail rotor to lose effect and the helicopter will spin to the right and settle to the ground. Alpha Company lost two helicopters in the same landing zone due to this problem.

Stickney and I were told to try and get into the landing zone where the crashed helicopters were. We made a steep approach over the trees, trying to find a place where we might set down. Stickney told the crewchief and gunner to tell the grunts on board they might have to jump if we couldn't land.

I looked out the right window and could see one of Alpha Company's crashed helicopters. The pilots, Joe Suarez and John Spencer, were standing beside it, watching us come in over

them. The other ship was behind them, lying on its right side. It had hit one of the jagged trees and flipped over, throwing the infantrymen out the side door. One man was pinned under the helicopter. Several soldiers and the helicopter crewmen dug frantically as jet fuel flowed from the ruptured fuel cell. Stickney tried to stop our rate of descent as a snag loomed up in front of us.

"I can't land. That snag is too damn high," he said. We kept settling toward the ground. We didn't have the power to hover. "Tell them to get out," shouted Stickney. "I can't hold it!" The cavalrymen started jumping from both sides. We were still between 12 and 15 feet from the ground. As the helicopter lost weight it began to hover, the rotor blades inches above the snag. The last grunt out the right side tripped as he went out the door. He plunged toward a huge rock, dropping his M16 as he fell. He hit the rock and crumpled into a heap, one leg thrown out at an odd angle.

We pulled out and headed back to LZ Oasis. The flight leader diverted the other helicopters to the other landing zones nearby. We picked up two chainsaws and headed back to the landing zones where they were lowered to the men on the ground. In about 15 minutes, they had downed several snags and made a log platform for a landing pad.

A medevac dustoff helicopter came in and picked up the injured. The man who was pinned under the helicopter was fortunate — he had been pressed into the mud and suffered only a few cracked ribs — unlike the soldier who jumped from our helicopter. He was unconscious and both legs were broken.

During the assault and extraction of the injured and the downed aircrewmen, ground fire had been light. Occasional shots from concealed snipers were answered immediately by a volley of fire from the perimeter guards.

Meanwhile, a few miles away, Bravo Company of the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion was air-assaulting troops into another landing zone. It was under heavy fire but they continued to fly in troops; one helicopter went down. Warrant Officer Allan Cox, the aircraft commander, was killed instantly when a round through the windshield hit him in the head. He slumped over the controls and the helicopter crashed into the trees. The remaining crewmen survived and made their way back to the landing zone under heavy sniper fire.

After completing our assaults, Stickney's and my helicopter with one other were assigned the mission of flying in supplies.

The other ship, piloted by Stan Becker and Jim Owens, was in front of

us, approaching the new landing zone. About a quarter mile from the LZ, they suddenly began taking fire from a small clearing. I could see tracer rounds arcing toward the descending ship. Our crewchief, manning the machine gun on the left side, fired a burst into the area where the ground fire was coming from and it stopped temporarily. The next two trips into the landing zone were repeats of the first.

On the third flight in, Becker told us to throw a smoke grenade into the ground-fire area. He had contacted a gunship en route to work the sniper over. We finished unloading the supplies, lifted out of the landing zone and started back to LZ Oasis. Becker asked over the radio if we had thrown a red smoke grenade to mark the sniper's location. Stickney told him we had.

"Well, there's a Chinook making an approach to that location. I hope he knows that there's bad guys down there," Becker said.

The Chinook, with a sling load of 105 cannon rounds, was approaching the red smoke. The pilot evidently thought that our soldiers had popped smoke to mark his drop zone. He must have heard Becker on the radio, because suddenly the helicopter climbed straight up and disappeared into the low-hanging clouds. Its crew would have to fly instruments all the way back to Pleiku, the nearest airfield with navigational and instrument approach facilities. It could have been fatal if the sniper had started firing into the sling load of 105 rounds. Then the gunship arrived and fired several rockets into the jungle around the clearing. We didn't receive any more fire. Either Charlie was dead or he had left the area.

Just before dark, we were released from resupply missions. We headed back to LZ Oasis to spend the night. No field kitchen had been set up, so we had to "dine" on C-rations cooked over a can filled with sand and JP-4 aviation fuel — an amazing little stove. When the sand was saturated with JP-4 drained from the sump of the helicopter, it would burn for a long time.

Around 2100 hours, a truck drove up to our helicopter and men started loading ammunition. Capt. May came over and told us a platoon was in a fire fight and was running low on ammo. It was somewhere east of the landing zone where the two helicopters had crashed. As I put my armor-plated chest protector on and fastened my shoulder harness, I felt uneasy. Too many things had happened there today. Oh well, Stickney doesn't seem concerned, I thought.

We lifted off and flew southwest. In the total darkness, we would have to fly

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by time, distance and heading to reach the landing zone. When we thought we were in the vicinity, we started calling on the FM radio to the unit on the ground. We made contact. The radio operator told us we were a little bit south of their position. Stickney turned back to the north and a minute later the radio operator said we were right over them. We could see tracer rounds flying in all directions. The radio operator told us they had a small clearing close by. We wouldn't be able to land but could get in close enough to kick the ammo out. We tried — but it was so black we couldn't see the clearing.

"Fire a flare," said Stickney.

"If we fire a flare we're going to give away our position," answered the radio man. "Can't you use your landing light to spot it?" he added.

"I'm not going to use the landing light while hovering around looking for the clearing. We'll get blasted out of the sky," Stickney said. So far our only outside lights were the standard navigation lights. Their lower portion was blacked-out so they could be seen only from above or level with the helicopter. This gave us a measure of protection from ground fire at night. Even though the enemy could hear the helicopter, in the dark it was difficult to tell exactly where it was.

"We'll fire one flare and give you covering fire," said the infantryman. "You'll have to get the ammo to us though, because we'll be out after we cover you," he added. The flare suddenly erupted to our right from 200 meters. We spotted the small clearing and Stickney nosed the helicopter over and accelerated toward the opening. As we approached it, we began taking fire from below. A mass of tracers began to rake the jungle. Our soldiers were pouring on the covering fire. Stickney made a vertical descent, the rotor blades barely clearing the trees.

"Get on the controls with me," he said. "If I get hit you'll be ready. Perez, you dump the ammo out; gunner, keep firing." Just as Perez began to throw the ammunition out, the flare flickered and died. Stickney immediately flipped the landing light on. We could not afford to drift in any direction or the blades would hit the trees.

In seconds the crewchief had the supplies off and screamed, "Go!" into the intercom. Stickney pulled power and we shot straight up. Once clear of the trees, he turned the landing light off and we headed back to LZ Oasis. Amazingly, we took only one hit through the right landing skid.

On 25 August 1966, Operation "Paul Revere II" came to a close. By body count, the enemy had lost more than 850 men.

OPERATION DAISY

Continued from page 51

mechanized infantry column at Ionde on its 120-kilometer drive north to the Bambi target area. Because we had arrived too late, we would be flown in by chopper to the front the next morning, Wednesday, just prior to the main assault.

We were asked to move out to positions along the defense perimeter where we dug in in shallow trenches for the night. After a cold tin of Ratpack corned beef and a gulp of hot Angolan water, I lay in my sleeping bag, thinking of an alert that had gone out earlier that afternoon. Reports had come in that a large FPLA/SWAPO force was headed our way. Tracking stations had also picked up the scrambling of several Russian-built MiG 21 fighter aircraft, manned by Cuban pilots, from Angolan bases. We were told that Ionde could possibly be their target. I lay wondering about this as the night silence settled around us.

Earlier that day, I witnessed the interrogation of a captured SWAPO terrorist. At first he remained silent, but when his South African interrogators changed their tactics from hostility to friendly chatter and the offer of cigarettes and food, he started talking.

He told us of atrocities committed by SWAPO officers against the local population and of his wish to quit his terrorist activities. However, he had remained with SWAPO after his commanders threatened him with death if he tried to desert and surrender to South African forces. He also described how his political commissar told him and his comrades of the torture that awaited them if they ever fell into the hands of the "Boers," a slang term used by SWAPO for members of the South African forces.

In recent months, he told us, terrorists had committed suicide rather than risk capture by the South Africans. The captive terr expressed gratitude at the good treatment he was receiving and said he realized now that the stories told by political commissars were lies. He had been taken from his home *kraal* in Ovamboland in South West Africa as a young teenager and brought to Angola for terrorist training in 1975. Now he would return to his native land a prisoner.

I thought of those other soldiers for whom the war was over — young South Africans wounded in skirmishes earlier that day. They had been brought to the forward medical

post by chopper and latter medevacked aboard transport planes to South West Africa. I wondered how many more would be wounded or die that night and the following day.

Meanwhile, the mechanized-infantry column, split to form a two-pronged attack formation from east and west, closed in on its target at Bambi. Sleep overcame me in my uncomfortable sleeping bag, which I shared with coarse Angolan sand and insects — and the threat of a surprise attack which would be announced by a siren in the command Ratel, an armored-infantry vehicle.

Around 0300, I was awakened by an eerie noise: deep droning from the sky. When I looked up from my trench, I saw the ominous, giant, black shapes of several C-130s sailing past against the dark sky. I realized that D-Day was about to dawn, for those planes carried a force of paratroopers who would be dropped north of Bambi to cut off SWAPO's northern escape route.

Shortly after sunrise, the moment of truth came for SWAPO. I watched as the first wave of Mirage fighters and Canberra and Buccaneer bombers streaked northward to discharge their deadly loads on SWAPO bases at Bambi, prior to the ground attack. However, luck had been on SWAPO's side. Terrs who escaped earlier contacts, had warned the occupants of SWAPO bases of the South African offensive, thus allowing the main body of the terrorist force to escape.

A small, suicidal group remained to stall the South Africans and protect the bases. These men, well-armed with Russian weapons, delivered fierce anti-aircraft fire as South African planes attacked. After several attacks, the Mirage fighters managed to knock out some 23mm guns as well as SAM-7 missile launchers.

With little resistance from SWAPO, the ground forces now swept into the base, which was spread over an area of 36 square kilometers. The majority of the approximately 1,200 terrorists had escaped into the Angolan bush, causing the South African forces to split up into smaller units, transforming the operation into a search-and-destroy mission.

Shortly after the first air attacks on the target area, we boarded an Allouette chopper at londe and headed for the front.

Watching the other Allouette accompanying us as we flew over the flat, green landscape, I noticed it suddenly banking steeply and turning back. Our chopper followed. The other pilot had noticed a white marker flare fired from the dense bush on the edge of a grass-covered *shona* — a dry riverbed — and turned back

to investigate. Standing on the ground in enemy territory, frantically waving their arms at us, were members of a small reconnaissance patrol, among them a soldier who had been wounded in the eye. They asked to be airlifted to the main fighting force some 60 kilometers distant. The two helicopters already carried capacity loads; our take-off could prove dangerous. Yet we could not leave them there, so they scrambled aboard and with rotor blades whipping up a small dust storm, we lifted off.

The pilots tried for normal vertical lift-offs reaching treetop level, dipping the nose of the chopper and dashing for the cover the trees gave against possible missile attack.

Experiencing difficulties with this, the pilot had to set back down, then employ gradual ascent maneuvers before we took off once more to the Bambi target area.

Nearing Bambi, we saw columns of smoke rising from the horizon — tell-tale signs of the morning's aerial bombardment. Coming in over the main SWAPO base area, we saw small groups of ground forces engaged in hot-pursuit operations, meeting small pockets of resistance from fleeing bands of SWAPO troops. Other men cleared mine fields and destroyed bunkers.

As we landed, we saw a South African Buffel standing to one side in a *shona,* burning fiercely. Troops had been loading the vehicle with arms and ammunition taken from SWAPO bunkers when a RPG rocket slipped and fell, exploding in the truck and setting off other explosives.

One soldier was hurled some 20 meters by the explosion, but escaped injury. Realizing the danger the truck posed for the large gathering of soldiers and vehicles, as well as two helicopters standing nearby, 36-year-old Maj. Andy Anderson jumped into it and drove it nearly 300 meters away. Ironically, the truck had had to be push-started earlier, but when Maj. Anderson stepped on the gas, the motor fired first time.

In a nearby cornfield, which formed the nucleus of the SWAPO base, soldiers had stopped entering the well-camouflaged, underground bunkers to collect arms, ammunition and supplies left behind by SWAPO after a young candidate officer was killed. On entering the bunker, he picked up a Russian helmet, detonating a booby-trap which instantly killed him. The soldiers now blew up the remaining bunkers.

Elsewhere in the bush, choppers had been summoned for top priority medevacs. A detachment of troops

traveling in Ratel armored personnel carriers had made contact with a small group of SWAPO terrorists. The terrs fled in all directions in the ensuing fire fight. Having captured one man with important documents, the South African soldiers spotted another fleeing across a clearing. Jumping from their Ratel to pursue him, two South Africans were killed and two seriously wounded when another terrorist, hiding under a bush, jumped up with his AK-47 rifle and opened up. Other soldiers killed him and captured a third terrorist. Later we learned that the wounded men had been medevacked to South Africa and admitted to a military hospital in Pretoria within eight hours, — thousands of kilometers from the scene of the battle. Both survived.

Meanwhile, air force personnel at Ionde learned something that caused them to jump with joy. Throughout the operation, Cuban-piloted MiG jets had been buzzing the target area at Bambi. Thursday morning, the radio at the tactical HQ at Ionde crackled alive: A MiG 21 had been shot down by a pair of South African Mirage fighters far to the west. Another MiG had been allowed to return to its base. This was the first time since the Korean War that South African planes had shot down a communist aircraft. After this incident the Cubans and their MiGs stayed on the ground.

At Bambi, the operational CO, Brigadier "Witkop" Badenhorst, Officer Commanding Sector 10, and other senior officers conferred in a command Ratel. They decided to turn Daisy into an area operation, employing search-and-destroy tactics.

During mopping-up operations, it was found that the target area had consisted of the main SWAPO command base, with protection bases of battalion strength to the east and west. Intelligence officers were also surprised to find a prison base holding members of the local population who had been captured and forced to labor in the corn fields to supply SWAPO with food. Dissident members of SWAPO were also detained in this base.

All in all, Operation Daisy bore little resemblance to the spectacular success of Operation Protea, but it was a fruitful maneuver of an entirely different nature.

An important command base was completely destroyed, and large quantities of arms, ammunition and supplies were captured. SWAPO's logistics had been destroyed, and the terrorists demoralized, scattered and forced to run further north.

Three weeks later, the last South Africans withdrew back into South West Africa. Operation Daisy's success was evident now. SWAPO raids into the territory, contacts with security forces and landmine blasts had all dramatically decreased since the operation — proving once again that a guerrilla-type war has to be fought offensively instead of defensively. Daisy once again demonstrated the official policy of the South African military authorities to pursue and destroy SWAPO wherever it goes.

SCOPE

Continued from page 54

In ballistics, trajectory is merely the bullet's angle of departure. It is generally conceded that the trajectories of most high-performance bullets are similar in form, but operate over different ranges. Using this principle, Jim Leatherwood designed a revolutionary new two-piece incrementally variable cam for the MPC/ART scope, consisting of a calibration ring and a trajectory cam ring.

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Charlie Leatherwood prepares to fire FN LAR match rifle with ART II scope.

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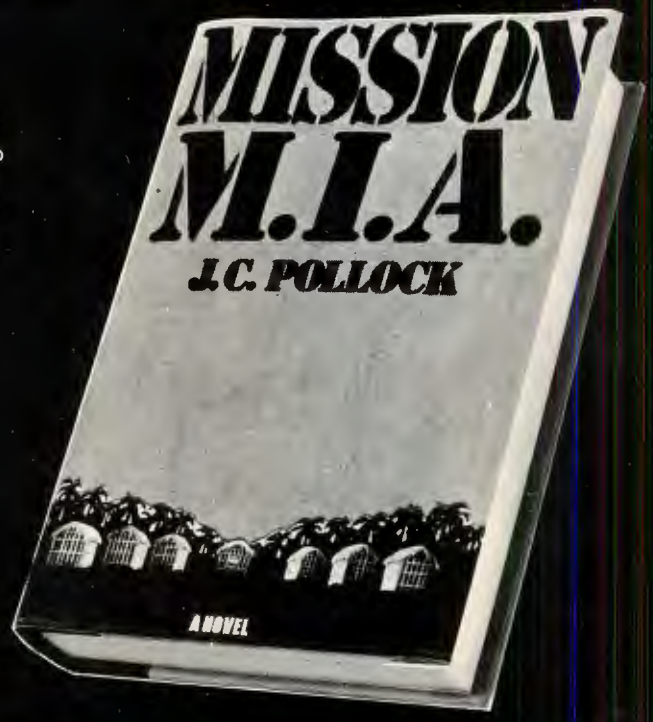

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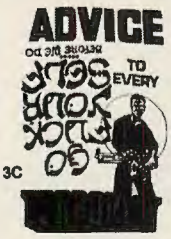
T-2300 — Exactly the same as T-2200, but provides a stainless clip in place of the Tekna-Straps for mounting on belt or inside boot top. — **$34.95**
T-2400 — Low profile black leather sheath with stainless boot clip and positive snap lock is included in this model, replacing the ABS sheath. Sheath is made of genuine top grain cowhide. — **$39.95**

BLACK MATTE TEKNA KNIVES — WON'T GIVE YOU AWAY!!
Exactly the same as the above Tekna Knives, but with a non-reflective black matte finish applied to the entire surface of the knife.
T-2200B — *Features* same unique ABS sheath as explained on T-2200 — **$44.95**
T-2300B — Features stainless clip on sheath as in above T-2200. — **$39.95**
T-2400B — Features black leather sheath as in above T-2400. — **$44.95**

Also avail. in Navy Blue: #2B & #2G
2W Cammo T-shirt — Long sleeve — **$8.95**
2X Cammo Jogging Shorts — 100% Cotton. S,M,L,X-L — **$6.50**
2Y Camo Sweatshirt — On those chilly days when all you need is a light jacket, this tightly insulated sweat jacket is ideal. The outer and inner lining are 100% Fortrel® polyester with a thin, insulating layer of 100% polyurethane foam. Features two slash pockets, adjustable drawstring hood, zipper front, rib knit cuffs and bottom. Sizes: S,M,L,X-L. Please specify. SPECIAL SALE — **$21.95**

3A — avail. in white or navy blue —. **$7.95**
3B — avail. in white or black — 2-sided printing — **$8.95**
3C — avail. in white — **$7.95**

3B



3C

3A

CAMOUFLAGE DUFFLE BAG — American made. Regulation size 21x36. Sturdy web handle and shoulder strap. Heavy duty steel grommets and hooks for padlocking. — **$13.95**
PLASTIC 1 qt. CANTEEN — with aluminum cup and nylon cover — **6.95.**
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TRIFOLD — Compact wallet folds into thirds. Ample pockets hold photos, credit cards, or cash. Sturdy construction insures the security of your valuables — **$9.95.**
BIFOLD — For the person who carries the normal amount of I.D. cards & cash. The wallet is the same rugged construction as the Tri-fold with velcro fastener, only smaller — **$8.95.**
SECURITY PURSE — A must for the traveler or jogger. The easiest way possible to conceal your valuables. Pocket is sewn onto a 16¼" velcro strip which allows it to be worn on arm, leg, or inside of clothing. Easily holds 7 or 8 credit cards & cash — **$6.95.**
WATCHBAND — Available only in black nylon. Perfect accessory for the active man or adventurer. Black nylon strap with "long-life" velcro safety lock. Band also provides a crystal cover strap for protection or for use in "blackout" conditions — **$5.50.**
"BREAK-FREE CLP" CLEANER, LUBRICANT & PRESERVATIVE — A new Teflonized Cleaner, lubricant, preservative, and water displacer that eliminated solvent cleaning in mechanisms and provides complete "Cleaning, Lubrication and Preservation" all in one product. For use in temperate, arctic and desert climates. For use on cars, trucks, building maintenance, construction equipment, shop equipment, boats, firearms, etc. Following sizes available:
a. 1 fl. oz. (30 ml) liquid **$1.49**
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TEKNA ITEMS!!
THE WORLD'S SIMPLEST 2-CELL FLASHLIGHTS . . . THAT WORK!
T-2000X — This tiny, three ounce Tekna Lite II cell is made of shock resistant plastic in a handsome matte black finish. It is also waterproof and emits a powerful beam. Supplied with two #222 bulbs, it operates on two AA alkaline batteries (not included). Length is 6", diameter is 1.16". Waterproof to 2000 feet. Candlepower is 1400. Switch is activated by ½ turn of lens; light is explosion proof — **$10.95.**
T-2000-0 — The Survival-lite is molded in high visibility international orange & is the ideal lifesaving personal light. The Survival-lite features a thermal flasher blub that will operate for 12-16 hours on a single pair of 'AA' alkaline cells. The intermittent pulses of light can be spotted up to two miles away. A #222 bulb is also supplied for regular flashlight use. The convenient nylon neck lanyard keeps the light handy while both hands are free. — **$11.95.**
T-2000-XR — Identical to the T-2000-X but with a red lens. The T-2000-XR is the ideal light source for map, chart or compass reading. Built-tough, like all Tekna lights, the T-2000-XR will survive the harshest environment — **$10.95.**
T-2208 Tekna Strap — Designed for use with any of the Tekna Lite 2 cells, the Tekna-Stap allows the lights to be fastened to the arm or leg, leaving both hands free. In addition, the exclusive self-tensioning stainless steel buckle compensates for muscular expansion and contraction, thus providing a snug fit at all times — **$6.50.**
MINI-STROBE — A FLASH OF BRILLIANCE!
This Tekna T-3000 mini-strobe is the smallest signal strobe in the world. Consisting of a xenon flash tube linked to a fully miniaturized electronic circuit and powered by a mercury battery (sold separately), the mini-strobe will operate continuously for 8-10 hours. Its brilliant omnidirectional flash can be seen over a ten mile radius. This lite is the same size as the T-2000 series, and is waterproof to 1000 feet. Switch is operated the same as the T-2000 series. Available in black or orange color. — **$39.95.**
T-3001 — Mercury battery for mini-strobe lite — **$4.95**
Soldier of Fortune 2nd Annual Convention Patch — commemorating the 2nd Annual SOF Convention — similar to original patch in design with red, white, and black colors — **$1.75**
Soldier of Fortune Decal — 3" vinyl decal with crossed daggers and beret design — red, white and black — **50¢**
Soldier of Fortune Coffee Mug — white porcelain with embossed SOF logo (same as on patch) — **$6.95**
Soldier of Fortune Ashtray — white porcelain with embossed SOF logo — **$4.95**
Zippo Cigarette Lighters — High quality with SOF logo in red, white and black — **$9.95**
Soldier of Fortune Binders — Save your issues of Soldier of Fortune, and keep them in good condition with this 12-issue binder. Black vinyl with white lettering — **$7.95**
NEW! REDUCE MUZZLE CLIMB WITH THE "MUZZLE MIZER"! The "Muzzle Mizer" weighs only 3½ oz. and extends overall length of weapon only 2¼". No weapon modification is necessary, and it is fully adjustable to the individual shooter. This unique item controls vertical and horizontal muzzle climb, controls muzzle flash, increases muzzle velocity an average of 20fps, increases group-size accuracy of weapon by 50%, and will deliver full magazine into silhouette target at 100 yards in full-automatic mode. It is available for the AR-15, M16, CAR-15, AR-180, AR-18, H&K91 and 93, and Mini-14. Price is only — **$34.95.**
SURVIVAL/RESCUE TOOL — Designed to meet U.S. military criteria; tested for eight years throughout world in jungles, mountains, deserts, and arctic regions. Put the odds in your favor and buy today! Comes with field manual complete with instructions and pictures. — **$36.00.**
LIFE TOOL — Do a friend a favor and buy two. This is the survival tool that fits in your wallet! Numerous uses for this useful item! Includes booklet showing over 40 ways to use the tool. Comes with a protective vinyl case and a burning lens to start a necessry fire in an emergency. Made of 440C Razor Grade Stainless Steel — **$18.95.**
Optional — Leather case with belt loop holds life tool & lens — **$4.95.**
AIR FORCE SURVIVAL KNIFE — This classic knife comes with a 5" parkerized blade, deep blood groove and saw back for cutting rope, air craft skin, etc. Hard leather handle is groove cut for a sure grip. Leather sheath with a sharpening stone. A must for the adventurer/outdoorsman — **$12.50**

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SHOT SHOW

Continued from page 57

KNIFEMAKERS' FIGHTER . . .

Knifemakers Kuzan Oda of Colorado and Al Mar of Oregon shared a booth at the show. Oda and Mar together have recently designed a new fighter, shown here by Oda. The knife, made of 154CM stainless-steel with black micarta handle, was in the prototype stage at the show, but should be available for sale by the time this story is printed. The knife features a special sheath (see photo above) that works extremely well from the shoulder position. It can also attach to your belt.

I took a long, hard look at this weapon, and found it to be blessed with the quality of design and manufacture found in all Kuzan Oda and Al Mar products. If you're interested, contact **Kuzan Oda,** Dept SOF, P.O. Box 15795, Colorado Springs, CO 80935, phone: (303) 597-3408, or **Al Mar,** Dept SOF, 5861 S.W. Benfield Ct., Lake Oswego, OR 97034, phone: (503) 682-1608.

VIKING SMG . . .

We see a lot of prototype SMGs at SOF, and receive assorted accounts about revolutionary new guns that someone has made in his basement — right next to the mushrooms — but we rarely pass this information on to our readers, since these weapons will never see production. But here's one that has gone beyond the prototype stage and is in production.

Weapons System Inc. is producing a new submachine gun in 9mm Parabellum called the Viking SMG. I'm looking forward to a chance to fire it, and if presented the opportunity, SOF's Peter G. Kokalis will do a test and evaluation and pass on the results to our readers in a future issue.

When you hold the Viking, it looks like a winner and seems to become a part of you.

Here are some specs: full-auto blowback operation with a cyclic rate of 700 to 800 rounds per minute; 20-and 36-round magazines; manual grip safety; post-type front sight and "L" flip type, 100m and 200m rear sight; retractable wire stock; unloaded weight of 2.96 kg; 370mm overall length (stock retracted); 220mm barrel length; six lands and grooves and approximate muzzle velocity of 360 meters per second.

Shown here (far left) is Weapon System's Jim Ballou firing Viking and MAC-10; (left) Viking compared to MAC-10 and Uzi. Accessories offered for the Viking by Weapons System Inc. include electronic sight, MAC-type suppressor, grenade launcher, rigid non-folding stock, special ammunition and a speedloader that can arm you with 36 rounds in three seconds. The weapon will retail for around $590.

We can't pass judgment until we try the gun out, but it looks fantastic. If you are in the market for an SMG, the Viking certainly merits consideration. Find out more about it by contacting **Weapons System Inc.,** Dept. SOF, 662 Cross St., Malden, MA 02148. Phone: (617) 322-6431.

BULLETIN BOARD

Continued from page 6

forts by SOF to reach him in order to satisfy reader complaints have been unsuccessful.

WHO'S THE HERO . . .

A Vietnam veteran recently received the New York *Daily News* Hero of the Month Award for his capture of Weather Underground fugitive Kathy Boudin, accused of involvement in the killing of two New York City police officers.

He is 35-year-old Michael Koch, who served on a medevac team in 'Nam and whose helicopter was shot down four times.

Koch, a New York corrections officer, observed Boudin seeking to avoid a police roadblock, gave chase and caught her.

Boudin was being sought for an attempted Weather Underground holdup in which the two officers and a Brinks truck guard were killed.

Koch said he did not deserve the recognition as a hero — that it really belonged to the two slain officers — and he handed over his $250 award to the policemen's widows.

AFRICAN WELCOME . . .

The South African government laid out the welcome mat for Polish refugees, particularly those with specific skills.

After imposition of martial law in that unhappy Eastern Bloc nation, 70 Polish seamen abandoned their merchant ship in Walvis Bay, S.A., and were immediately granted asylum and given work permits by the South African government.

Permanent residency will be granted upon completion of the necessary papers.

The South Africans indicated they would give asylum to any Pole able to get there, but are particularly interested in those who are skilled mechanics, toolmakers, electricians, welders and carpenters.

THAILAND DRUG WAR . . .

Sharp fighting broke out recently in northern Thailand between reinforced Thai Border Patrol Police (BPP) and Burmese "Shan State" irregular troops loyal to opium warlord Khun Sa. Khun Sa (aka Chieng Che Fu) is said to command a private force of between 2,000 and 4,000 well-armed and

disciplined troops of the Shan United Army in the border areas near Chiang Rai Province, in northern Thailand, and neighboring Burma. The BPP confiscated an extensive cache of weapons and ammunition in the initial assault on a large opium refinery and headquarters complex, but the quality and quantity of the materiel (RPG-18s, recoilless rifles, Type 56s, etc.) leads them to speculate that they are opposed by a larger, better equipped force than was originally expected.

The operation has been somewhat bungled so far. Khun Sa safely escaped into Burma with the bulk of his force, leaving 50 of his troops dead — killed while protecting his retreat. In the first four days of fighting the BPP suffered 16 KIA and 42 wounded. As of this writing, Thai military sources report continued fighting throughout the "Golden Triangle" with units of the regular Thai army and Royal Thai Air Force in support of the BPP. Meanwhile, reports indicate that troops loyal to Khun Sa are massing inside Burma, awaiting the arrival of possibly 1,000 to 2,000 fresh troops from other areas. If so, fighting could continue for quite some time. Already, Khun Sa is reported to have attacked the Thai BPP/Customs station at Mai Sai, a deceptively quiet border town astride the Nam Kok River between Thailand and Burma near the center of the Golden Triangle. Informed sources in Thailand provided deep background information for this story and revealed a long history of drug-related warfare which often utilized "wet" operations beyond the literal borderline of international law.

Knowledgeable sources report that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has offered an unprecedentedly high reward of $25,000 for the "apprehension" of Khun Sa until the year 2000. In retaliation, Khun Sa initiated a systematic program which eradicated suspected DEA informers, and issued rewards for photographs of DEA agents or their families. As a result, the DEA has been forced to move some agents, and all dependents, out of Chiang Mai, the U.S. Consular headquarters in northern Thailand where, in 1980, the wife of one agent was abducted and murdered while shopping.

With over one third of the world's opium supply on the table, it's a high-stakes game. However, such large-scale direct action in this sensitive area underscores the determination of one of the "players" — Thailand — to enforce its own border security, and effectively reestablishes Thai influence and control in an area "disputed" by a flourishing, flagrant cross-border drug trade.

COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Continued from page 10

tured with oversize barrel hood, lugs and a snuggly fitted bushing. Once mated to the pistol by an armorer or pistolsmith, the lock-up was constant and the resulting accuracy outstanding. Chamber and rifling dimensions were maintained to a high standard of accuracy. Demand for these NM barrels and bushings has always been high, but since the supply has been nearly exhausted, most gunsmiths have simply had to make do with stock barrels welded and fitted to the pistols.

A new source of NM barrels and bushings is now available. Fred Kart, of Kart Sporting Arms Corp., Dept. SOF, Riverhead, NY 11901, now offers a National Match .45 barrel and bushing for those who want a top-quality NM barrel for custom-pistol work.

Kart Sporting Arms Corp. currently manufactures NM barrels for the U.S. government and is producing enough not only to fill its military contracts but for commercial sale as well. These Kart-made NM barrels are the finest I have ever seen and, when installed on .45 pistols, have proven to be superby accurate. Fit and finish are first-class. All barrels are made from forgings and, once finished, are proof-tested and magnafluxed. Price for a five-inch standard-length NM barrel and bushing from Kart is $84. A six-inch version is also offered, priced at a reasonable $155. (Dealers should inquire about discount pricing.)

These Kart NM barrels and bushings provide a product long overdue in the .45-pistol custom-work department. Installation should be done only by a competent armorer or pistolsmith. Kart has an excellent reputation for producing quality materials, one of which is its target-.22 conversion for the 1911 pistol.

Fred Kart has also developed an easy-to-do, inexpensive conversion of the stock GI .45-caliber 1911 pistol to 9x19mm NATO. Kart realized that he could easily and economically convert the existing stock of Government Model pistols to 9x19mm. Part of his concept is electrobeam-welding a filler insert into the breech face of a .45 slide to allow the 9x19mm cartridge to work without having to replace the slide with a new 9x19mm one. By simply exchanging the barrel, ejector, extractor and magazine, he can modify the stock 1911-series GI guns to meet 9x19mm NATO requirements, a critical boost to services such as the Navy that cannot afford to buy expensive new pistols. Kart's simple approach to saving taxpayers' money is an inspiration.

New Devel eight-shot magazine for the .45 Colt auto. Improvements in feed angle and construction ensure long service life and reliable function. Photo: Devel Corp.

CREATIVE Gunsmithing, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 357, Bonsall, CA 92003, offers a line of gunsmith accessories designed for the .45 pistol armorer or pistolsmith. Its magazine-well filler block is ideal for use when fitting slides or working on a vise-mounted pistol frame. The filler block protects the frame from distortion or bending while being securely held by the vise. Also available is its magazine bumping die that makes magazine-feed-lip conversions simple. For those who prefer shorter overall-length ammo than .45 hardball, the bumping die allows the new feed-lip configuration to be easily shaped by the gunsmith. The die is hardened for long life and simplifies the operation of lip bending on the magazine. A third accessory is its mainspring-housing pin pusher, which is available for the pistolsmith who prefers to spend less time when replacing the stock pin during the assembly and disassembly of the pistol during the trigger job or adjustment. Instructions are provided with all Creative Gunsmithing products and other needed items for the .45 pistol armorer.

THE Pin-Pal is another super-handy little tool I have been using in my .45-auto armorer work. It is a combination barrel-bushing wrench and mini-press that allows for simple removal of the mainspring-housing retainer pin. You can forget the old method of using a punch and hammer — and the Pin Pal's much easier to use. No more scratched or dinged frame or grips. For anyone who routinely disassembles the 1911 pistol for detail work or trigger jobs, the Pin-Pal is the answer.

I use my sample regularly, and it is a welcome addition to my armorer's kit. At a cost of $14.95 from Pin-Pal, Dept. SOF, 1626 Wilcox, Suite 636, Hollywood, CA 90028, it is well worth the price.

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AFRICAN READERS, Attention! Wanted by collector: RPD belts and parts; AK-47 magazines; foreign elite and paratroop insignia and badges; original foreign cammies and web gear — any quantities; will buy or trade for what you need. Peter Kokalis, 5749 North 41st Place, Phoenix, AZ 85018. (TO)

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